

FRANCESCO DI GIORGIO MARTINI
OF SIENA

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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Edited by Selwyn Brinton and
P. G. Konody.)



*By Francesco di
Giorgio]*

**I NATIVITY
(DETAIL).**

[S. Domenico-SIENA.

FRANCESCO DI GIORGIO MARTINI OF SIENA

PAINTER, SCULPTOR, ENGINEER, CIVIL
AND MILITARY ARCHITECT
(1439-1502)

By
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PART I
With Twenty-Seven Illustrations

BESANT & CO. LTD.
21, ORANGE STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

First published in 1934

Durga Sah Municipal Library, Naini Tal, दुर्गसाह नमुनिसिपल लाइब्रेरी नैनीताल	
Class No, (विभाग)	728
Book No, (पुस्तक)	M 44 B
Received On	

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MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE
LIMITED, HIS MAJESTY'S PRINTERS
9AST HARDING STREET, LONDON, E.C.4

To my learned Friend
PADRE ENRICO BULLETTI, O.F.M.
of the Convento della Osservanza,
Siena

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FOREWORD

To say that this work comes forward to meet a need in the art world at this very time may sound conventional; but if I allow myself such a phrase it may not be far from the actual truth. Within the last half-century that wonderful School of Siena has come to claim its place—a very great one—in the rich heritage of Italian art; and at the same time, out of much obscurity and uncertainty, slowly among her Masters this figure of Francesco di Giorgio Martini has emerged, a notable and dominating personality, to command the admiration and keen interest, as well as the close attention, of art-lovers and collectors throughout the world.

My own study of this Master of the Arts goes back to other conditions and times, when, coming north from Rome, a young and very enthusiastic student, I had wandered into that vast shadowy church of S. Domenico at Siena, and had paused, enthralled, before his great painting of the Nativity. Although then placed under Signorelli, it was perhaps its Botticellian character which held me; and I spent many happy hours in that first—and best—visit in copying the angel forms which reappear in these pages. That strong attraction never left me; even though the claims of other work prevented me from giving myself more fully to this art of Francesco di Giorgio. When, free at last, I came to grips with my subject, I found its interest became trebled; but its difficulties no less so. The material which then came before was so abundant, so rich, so important, that I found it better to divide my study of the Master into two Parts: taking here his work in painting (religious subjects, Gabelle, miniatures and decorative panels) and his great “Treatise of Architecture”; and reserving for a later volume his actual achievement in sculpture and architecture, which is now at last becoming more fully recognized and appreciated.

Even so, I feel that I must here claim my readers' sympathy and kindly help in dealing with one who both touched and treated successfully—as painter, sculptor, architect and engineer—almost every side of creative art. The position was not, indeed, so uncommon in those great days of Renaissance creation. In Siena, Vecchietta, Francesco's own master, and his successor, the famous Baldassare Peruzzi, are examples : and here the name of Leonardo, no less universal in his outlook on art, may come, almost inevitably, into our thought. The two men met as friends and equals; could understand and appreciate each other's attainments. In mechanics, Francesco, slightly the elder, may have been as great, in his astonishing discoveries in military engineering even superior : but no mortal has ever yet reached that soaring genius of the divine Leonardo. Here my own studies in writing and lecturing upon Leonardo, and as Member of the Società Vinciana of Milan, may have been of help; no less than my earlier training in analysing the most conflicting evidence and tangled claims of attribution which any Master—save perhaps Giorgione—could offer in this field of art. I have tried to sift that evidence, to judge these problems fairly; and, holding the brief for my client, to pass over no just claim, but press no point unduly in his favour. I have sought to let the Master's character emerge, clear, almost crystalline in its sincerity, its true modesty of greatness, often from his own letters; and behind him to set, as background, that wonderful Urbino, that cultured Court admired by all Europe; and, through all my story, this old city of Siena, unique in Italy—where I have written many of these lines in the very house (now Albergo della Scala) where he lived and worked, facing the old Baptistery of S. Giovanni—and which always remained, in his many wanderings, so dear, so close to his heart.

Lastly, I must give one word of warm thanks to the many friends whose sympathy and help has been with me in this work. Sir Claude Phillips, who took so personal

an interest in these studies of mine, has passed away, like another friend, William Heywood, whom I knew in old days at Siena; and I have owed much to that fine scholar of Jesi, Don Cesare Annibaldi; to the late M. Carl Dreyfus of Paris; to the authorities of the Ducal Library at Turin, the Magliabecchiana at Florence, the Communal Library of Siena; in London to Mr. G. C. Hill, of the British Museum, in his work upon Sieneese medals, and to such authorities upon the history and art of Siena as Dr. Edmund Gardner and Professor Langton Douglas.

Yet more directly I owe much to the specialized studies of Col. Rocchi, of F. Donati, P. Rossi and A. Franchi, and of Paul Schubring in his study of Sieneese sculpture in this *quattro-cento*; and, in the important matter of illustrations, to Sig. Dall 'Armi of Turin, in placing at my disposal, through the kind introduction of the painter, Mario Micheletti, a fine set of prints of drawings in the Ducal Library, and to Signora Lombardi of Siena in the illustration of paintings and buildings. Nor must I forget my obligations to Col. Schroeder, in his research upon that difficult subject of the bastion as created by Francesco di Giorgio; to Senator Adolfo Venturi, who has done more than any man living to restore our Master to his true place in Italian art and architecture; and to my learned friend, Padre Enrico Bulletti, O.F.M., of that ancient Sieneese Convent of the Osservanza, which was so closely connected with that Master in his latest years upon the sunny hill-side without Porta Ovale.

S. B.

April 1934.

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CHAPTER I.

SIENA, ANCIENT CITY OF THE VIRGIN.

To the lover of Italy her interest, her attraction, her almost personal hold—and this even under modern conditions—yet remain unfailing, it might seem inexhaustible. This remark was made to me years ago by one who had long lived in that country, who knew it intimately and whose published works had added to our knowledge of old Florence¹; and since then I have been able again and again to verify its truth in my own experience. The wave of modernity, inevitable in a great and advancing modern Nation State, may affect, but can never entirely obliterate those precious landmarks of past life and culture; and to those of us who know and love that past story there shall come, ever and again, the joy of finding their emergence, frequent and unlooked for, in this favoured land—then most of all when we begin to leave the beaten track of the pilgrims who descend yearly southwards from Milan or Genoa upon Florence, Rome and Naples.

In so doing they have perhaps left aside one of those cities of central Italy which has hitherto happily preserved, untouched, unspoilt, much of her mediæval character and individual charm,—in her distinctive and most delightful art, her narrow streets, bordered by frowning palaces or debouching into the sudden glory of her great Piazza, the wide spaces and subdued splendour of her churches and Cathedral, the memories of her rulers, her heroes, her artists and her Saints. That city is Siena, the ancient city of Mary Virgin,—*Senae, vetus civitas Virginis*. "*Molles Senae*,"—wrote Symonds—"fond of all things brilliant, unstable through defect of sternness"; and found in the exquisitely sensitive creations of Simone Martini's art something of these very qualities of the painter's city.

The great days of the old Republic of Siena go back as far as the XIIIth century, when in the inevitable struggle for supremacy she proved herself more than a match for

¹ The late Rev. James Wood Brown, author of "The Dominican Church of S.M. Novella at Florence," "The Builders of Florence," and other works.

Florence. In the year 1260 the two Republics were jealously facing each other, and their armed conflict was coming closer; trade jealousy lying behind all this, though the immediate issue had become entangled with the historic quarrel between Guelf and Ghibelline. The treaty (1254) between Florence and Siena had stipulated that neither State should give shelter to the other's enemies; and when Siena, Ghibelline in her own sympathies, refused to expel the Ghibelline *fuorusciti* of Florence this quarrel came to an immediate issue. "We will"—such was the message of the Florentine envoys to Siena—"that this city be forthwith dismantled, and that all her walls be levelled with the ground; further we will to place a Signoria in every Terzo of Siena at our pleasure; in like manner to build forthwith a strong fortress in Camporegi, and maintain the same for our magnificent and potent Commune of Florence. As for you, if you do not all that we have commanded, await with certainty to be besieged; and we warn you that, in such case, we are resolved to have no pity. Give us then at once your answer."

The "Venti-quattro," rulers of Siena, gave back a no less proud answer. "We bid you return to your Commune, and say unto them that we will give them an answer face to face." Then the ambassadors returned to the camp of the Florentines near Montaperto; and meanwhile in the city was great fear, for the army of Florence and her allies from Lucca, Pistoja, Prato, Bologna, S. Gimignano was a mighty one. "Tremendous"—says the chronicler—"for its numbers," which must have been close on 40,000 fighting men; and among the councillors some advised that "in something the Florentines be pleased and contented, lest worse things come upon us." But the heart of Siena rang true in that hour of her deadly peril; and within the old city men and women turned to prayer. I have described in my "Republic of Siena" that dramatic scene, when in a moment of inspiration Siena had found her safety. "In those narrow streets that climb up from the Piazza we might even today picture the long procession winding its way, amid a broken sea of anxious faces and the hoarse chant of solemn litany. First the great carven

crucifix which yet stands within the Duomo, then the thronging monks before the image of Mary Virgin, then Messer the Bishop, barefooted himself in penitence, and at his side Buonaguida Lucari, whom Siena had chosen in this great danger to be her dictator—and he, good man, is in his shirt, and with a rope about his neck. Then the Cathedral Canons, chanting holy litanies and psalms; and behind throng the people, barefooted and uncovered, and all the women barefooted, many with their hair dishevelled, ever beseeching God and His Mother, the Virgin Mary.”

“But, on a sudden, rising from among the sobbing crowd, Buonaguida (the very name sounds prophetic) has found the word that is in all men’s hearts—the word that shall save the city. “Gracious Virgin, Queen of Heaven, Mother of sinners, to Thee I, a miserable sinner, give, grant and recommend this city and *contado* of Siena. And I pray thee, Mother of Heaven, that Thou wilt be pleased to accept it, though but a little gift, and to free and defend this our city from the hands of our enemies the Florentines.”¹

“This”—I went on to add—“is the first, the most famous dedication of Siena to the Virgin Queen; and it is difficult in our day to measure the extraordinary effect which this act produced upon her citizens,”—the panic checked, the crowd of terror-stricken penitents transformed into a band of heroes.² From henceforth Siena is in a special sense the city of Mary—*vetus civitas Virginis*—and lies shrouded from her foes beneath the mantle of the Queen of Heaven. Mary has become their feudal lord,

¹ V. “The Republic of Siena” (Part II of “The Renaissance in Italian Art”). In my account here of the events leading to the great battle and the first solemn dedication of Siena to the Virgin I acknowledge my indebtedness to the fine adaptation given in magnificent English from Malavolti’s Chronicle by my friend, William Heywood—now lost to us—in his delightful “Palio and Ponte.” Heywood lived in Siena, drank deep of her inspiration, made her life and story part of himself.

² Twelve years before this (1248) the women of Parma, when that city was hard pressed by Frederic II and his Viceroy, the terrible Ezzelino, had betaken themselves in prayer to “the Blessed Virgin, that she would entirely save her Parma from Frederic and other enemies . . . and the Mother of Mercy had brought this petition to her Son.” Here, too, had come signal and unhopd-for victory. See my “Gonzaga, Lords of Mantua,” ch. I, p. 23.

and at the same time their heavenly advocate—*advocata inter Christum et Senam suam*; even the dear Babe at her breast sometimes neglected—"per dare a Siena tutto il suo latte"—a strange metaphor indeed, but full of tenderness and simple faith.¹ All these things befell on that fateful Thursday, the 2nd of September, 1260; "and nearly all night long the people thronged to confess and make peace one with another, and he who had received the greatest injury went about seeking his enemy to kiss him on the mouth and to pardon him. In this they consumed the greater part of the night.

And when morning was come the Ventiquattro sent three criers, into every Terzo one, proclaiming and crying "Valorous citizens, make ready! Arm yourselves! Take your perfect armour, and let each man, in the name of our Mother the Virgin Mary, follow his proper banner, ever recommending himself to God and to his Mother." Hardly was the proclamation finished when all the citizens flew to arms. The father did not wait for the son, nor one brother for another; and so they went forward toward the Porta San Viene. And thither came all the standard bearers. The first that of S. Martino . . . the second that of the City, with a great army of people well equipped. The third was the royal banner of Camollia, which represented the mantle of Our Mother, the Virgin Mary, and was all white and shining, fair and pure. Behind that banner came a great multitude of people, citizens, foot soldiers and horsemen, and with this company many priests and friars to aid and comfort the troops; and all were of good will, of one mind and of one purpose, and well disposed against our enemies the Florentines."²

The great battle which ensued, known to history as the battle of Montaperto, is one of the decisive conflicts of Italian mediæval history. Despite their fewer numbers the treason of Bocca degli Abati, a Florentine Ghibelline,

¹ In a later age we shall find our Francesco di Giorgio, in his delightful Gabella paintings of 1480, showing the Virgin commending to her Son's especial care her beloved city of Siena, set on pillars on a kind of tray, with its walls and towers (including the Mangia) complete. "*Hec est civitas mea*" is here the legend.

² V. William Heywood, "Palio and Ponte, ch. I. The city of Siena is still divided into three Terzi or Terzieri—the Terzo di Città, di San Martino, and Terzo di Camollia, its banner pure white.



2 THE LUPA (SHE-WOLF)
OF SIENA.

[PIAZZA DEL
CAMPO, SIENA.

gave a first advantage to Siena, which changed to panic when her German knights, coming suddenly round the base of the mountain, took the Florentines and their allies in the rear. The footmen of Florence, the flower of her army, died fighting, disdaining surrender, around her *caroccio*: the rest of the army was put to flight and pursued with terrible slaughter, not less than 10,000 Guelphs being killed. In that day—as Dante wrote later—the river of Arbia ran red with blood, and the power of the City of the Lily was broken for all that generation.

It is at this very time that the art of Siena makes its appearance in the paintings of Guido da Siena, one of a family of artists who may have preceded the far greater Duccio, whose famous *Majesty* was painted in 1308 for the high altar of Siena Cathedral, to replace that earlier panel of *Our Lady of Grace* before which the solemn dedication of the city to Mary Virgin had been made; and, if I have dwelt here at some length upon the circumstances which led to that dedication, it is because they are of direct and real importance—even apart from their political significance—within this narrow but most fascinating field of Sienese art creation.

For out of the whole story of this dedication of the city to Mary as her feudal Lord, her heavenly Queen, her Advocate with Christ, two facts emerge which are continuous in their effect through succeeding ages. One is the intense jealousy—we might almost say hatred—of Florence; always feared, distrusted, opposed; and yet destined one day, by force and guile, to become the old city's master. But for this intense inherited tradition nothing would have been more likely and natural than that the immense development of Florentine art under the great Giotto, continued under Gaddi, Orcagna, Fra Lippo and Filippino, Masolino and Masaccio, the Pollaiuoli, Verocchio and the Tuscan sculptors, should have invaded Siena, and there proved—as elsewhere in Italy—a vivifying and stimulating influence. But with one exception—that of Donatello, whose work on the font of S. Giovanni and within the Cathedral of Siena is significant—this was not the case. The Florentine painters never seem to really influence or touch Siena; and the reason must be surely found in the feelings which I have just described, and which

throw their roots back as far as even before the great conflict of Montaperto. The Sieneſe painting, always decorative, ſplendidly hieratic, goes out in the work of ſuch artiſts as Taddeo Bartoli to diſſuſe itſelf through Tuscany and Umbria; receives in its turn from Pinturicchio, commiſſioned by the great families of Piccolomini and Petrucci; but never comes definitely under influence from without, until in its decline it loſes all individual character and charm to become entirely eclectic.

Yet in another point of view that ſtory of Montaperto and the dedication to the Virgin Queen comes again very definitely into her art ſtory. Rio has referred to this in a paſſage whoſe main contention I entirely approve. He has remarked on the indifference of the Sieneſe painters to landscape, and, in general, to that whole world of nature, which at this very time was opening ſuch a wonderful page to thoſe of Florence; but he goes on to add that this neglect may be ſhown to have come, not from any lack of power, that “for them, the gold background was always inſeparable from the image of devotion”; and this muſt be attributed, not to their limited outlook (*leurs vues bornées*), but to the extreme orthodoxy of their taſte. “Beſide this”—he goes on to add—“their cult of the Virgin, as their city’s Queen,—not wiſhing to conceive of her as a humble maiden but a glorious being, enthroned or riſing to heaven, or crowned by her Son,—led this ſchool hardly ever to paint the Nativity, or yet the Adoration of the Shepherds or of the Magi, thoſe three favourite ſubjects of the Florentine and Umbrian ſchools, which lent themſelves to the introduction of naturalism of every kind, even including portraiture.”¹

This writer goes on to mention Bernardino Fungai, as one of the exceptions to this rule in his *Adoration* ſubjects of the Siena Academy; but, as a matter of fact, there are others, among whom I might include that intereſting, but little known painter Andrea di Niccolo, with his quaintly beautiful *Nativity* of the ſame Gallery, or yet again Pietro da Doni in the ſame place and ſubject, with his adoring ſhepherds and traditional animals, looking on in mute ſympathy; or yet again Bartolo di Maſtro Fredi, whoſe proceſſional *Adoration of the Magi* (Siena Gallery) recalls

¹ V. A. F. Rio. *L’Art Chrétien*. Vol. I, ch. I, p. 207-8.

Gentile da Fabriano's famous rendering of this subject; or, lastly here, the special subject of our study, Francesco di Giorgio, in his most beautiful *Nativity* of S. Domenico at Siena,—though he shows his kneeling Virgin robed regally in blue starred with gold. But the point made by Rio does certainly hold good in a very large number of Sienese paintings, which deal with the Virgin enthroned among Saints and angels (Duccio, Simone Martini, Matteo di Giovanni, Benvenuto di Giovanni), or crowned by her Son in glory (Sano di Pietro, Francesco di Giorgio, Bernardini Fungai, Girolamo del Pacchia), or ascending to heaven (Taddeo di Bartolo and others); and the Sienese school consistently treats this subject of the Virgin Mother with something of the Byzantine hieratic splendour of tradition. The loss—especially as to Florentine influence—is obvious; but was there not something gained as well? “The Sienese”—said Professor Solmi to me one summer in the Brera Gallery—“remain after all always primitives (*I Senesi restano sempre primitivi*),” and this very fact is part of their wonderful and enduring charm; and we shall find, at even the close of the *quattro-cento*, Matteo di Giovanni, Sano di Pietro, Lorenzo Vecchietta, Benvenuto di Giovanni in that magnificent altarpiece which has now left the Siena Gallery, Neroccio in a whole series of lovely Virgins, and lastly Francesco di Giorgio keeping all the purity of feeling, the fine severity of design, the decorative beauty of colour and line inherited from the tradition of Simone Martini and even of Duccio himself.

There can be, unhappily, no doubt that the progress of her art was affected—frequently to its lasting harm—by the vicissitudes to which this ill-governed city was continually subject. When Ambrogio Lorenzetti was called on to decorate the Sala de' Nove, the great chamber of the Council in the Palace of the Sienese Republic, he chose—or was given—as his theme the pictured allegory of the well-governed and ill-ruled States. On the one side he there painted the three Christian and four Cardinal Virtues; and to these last he added out of his own thought two others, Magnanimity and Peace, this last white-robed, with the olive branch in her left hand—that most lovely creation, almost Greek in its beauty of type, of this great

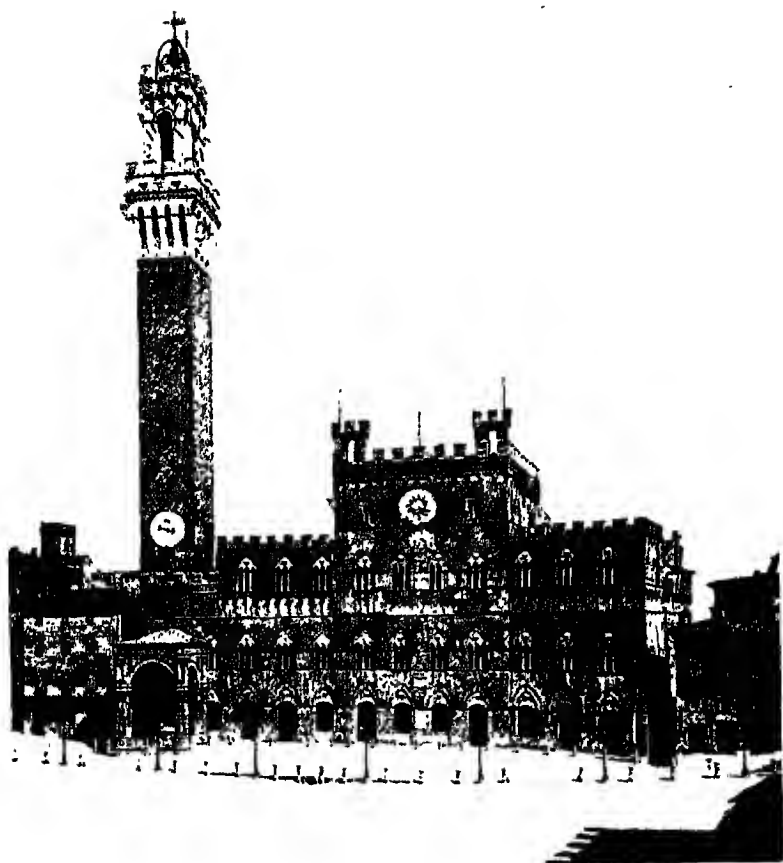
Sienese Master's genius.¹ And beneath these emblematic figures the citizens of old Siena are seen to advance in long procession, holding a cord whose end is in the hand of the seated form of Concord, and reaches that of the enthroned Commune; beneath whom the armed knights wait on guard—"certains visages pâles," says Rio, "merveilleusement encadrés dans des casques de fer"—with mailed figures and upraised spears.

Then, beside this allegory, above its gate rises the well-governed city—just as Siena climbs up above Fonte Branda—where knights and ladies ride forth; the merchant leads out his mules laden with close-packed cases; in the fields without the crops are ripening, and maids are dancing in a round, singing some *carola* to their step. "Turn your eyes"—writes the old painter—"to behold this (*volgete gli occhi a rimirar*), O ye who bear rule!" But on the other side it is the ill-governed State whose legend is before us; it is no longer the merchant, but the armed soldier who issues from her gates; and upon the raised dais, in place of the Commune, it is Lucifer himself, Lord of Evil, who sits enthroned, with Avarice, Hypocrisy and Vainglory (*Vana Gloria*) at his side as his assessors.

Here was a pictured lesson to his city, by that Master of whom Ghiberti wrote—"Ambrogio was a most noble draughtsman, well skilled in the theory of art and otherwise learned"; but the lesson was thrown away on a fickle and foolish democracy, and from 1350 onwards things seem to have gone from bad to worse. The mischief was, no doubt, accelerated by that horrible plague, in 1348, which forms such a dramatic introduction to the love stories of Boccaccio's *Decameron*²; but, if Florence had suffered terribly, in her rival Siena the ravages must have been something appalling. Between May and August of that summer (1348) it was reckoned that at least 80,000 persons—out of every ten citizens nine—had perished; and the

¹ See my account of these remarkable frescoes in "The Republic of Siena" (Part II, Renaissance in Italian Art), ch. I. Vasari, too, says of the Master, "the manners (*costumi*) of Ambrogio were in every way praiseworthy, and rather those of a gentleman and a philosopher than of a craftsman"; and this confirms my opinion that to him we owe probably the subject, and certainly the working out of that subject, in these admirable frescoes.

² V. Boccaccio. "Il Decamerone. Proemio."



3 THE PALAZZO PUBBLICO OF SIENA.

plague returned five several times in the century following.

All social order fell to pieces, under conditions identical to those which Boccaccio has described at Florence. "In this so great affliction and misery of our city the revered authority of the laws, both human and divine, had fallen to pieces and become dissolved, since their ministers and executors, like all others, were either dead or sick, or so deprived of servants that they could not carry out their duties; for the which reason it was lawful for anyone to do what he pleased." The survivors, growing restless, wandered through deserted palaces and houses, or became abandoned to evil living. The vast fabric of the Cathedral of Siena, which we yet trace in her ruined aisles, was, in 1368, definitely abandoned; and, to add to the city's misfortunes, civil strife broke out in the most violent and protracted form; the Monte de' Nove, which had ruled with prudence for more than a century, was overthrown and the aristocracy proscribed; power fell into the hands of the lowest class of tradesmen, the "*negotiatores abjecti*," and Siena was sunk so low that she had to buy off the Companies of Adventure who were pillaging her lands. The depth of her political degradation was reached when (1390) she placed herself voluntarily under the rule of Gian Galeazzo of Milan, that most deadly foe of Italian liberty, and set his arms upon the front of her great Palace of the Republic.¹

It was inevitable that the art of Siena should suffer directly and very deeply in these conditions. The high impulse shown in those noble words in the Introduction² to the Statutes of these Painters of Siena—"that nothing can have beginning nor end without these three things: without power, without knowledge, and without will inspired by love (*ces trois choses ; sans pouvoir, sans savoir et sans vouloir avec amour*)"—were already forgotten in

¹ Cf. Rio (*op. cit.*), p. 139, who gives the terms of this abject surrender; and my "Republic of Siena," ch. I. The death of Gian Galeazzo from plague dissolved his power even more quickly than it had been created.

² As quoted by Rio (*op. cit.*) from Milanese. These words deserve letters of gold: but in the same Statutes they declare "their mission, by the grace of God, is to show to the ignorant and unlettered the things of marvel brought forth by man's worth in the virtue of holy faith"—thus giving the definitely religious aim of their work.

the heats of party conflict; and such artists as Galgano, Paolo di Neri, Cecco di Manno, Meo di Piero, even the sculptor Brunaccio, who received a letter, yet existing, from Saint Catherine, and Andrea Vanni, who was privileged to paint her portrait, give only to art what they can spare from civil tumults and proscriptions. That the tradition of better things could survive during those years of tumult and terror is itself something to wonder and rejoice at; but it certainly did so in the work of Andrea Vanni's friend, Bartolo di Maestro Fredi, of the yet greater Taddeo Bartoli and of that typically XVth century Sienese painter Domenico di Bartolo; who hands on the best tradition of the art of Siena to such craftsmen as Giovanni di Paolo, Matteo di Giovanni, Lorenzo Vecchietta, Sano di Pietro, Benvenuto di Giovanni, Neroccio, and this latter's contemporary and partner in his earlier life, that greatest craftsman of them all, Francesco di Giorgio Martini.

The work of these men falls definitely into the XVth century, and possesses certain qualities in common; and here we may notice a point which must have opposed that atmosphere of political intrigue and revolution to which I have alluded, and reacted very beneficially upon Sienese art within this period. Intensely emotional, as we have seen that this old Siena always was, "fond of all things brilliant, unstable through defect of sternness," this very side of her character laid her open, not only to vindictive party hatred, but no less—or even more so—to the overpowering impulse of religious revivalism. And at this very time two Saints made their impress very deeply on the history of Siena, and found beautiful expression in her art, these being S. Bernardino, the greatest preacher of his age, and the Dominican nun, S. Catherine of Siena. Of noble birth and beautiful person at the age of seventeen Bernardino Albizzechi had been attracted to the great Hospital of Siena, the Spedale della Scala, devoting himself there to the sick; until, joining the Franciscan order, he went forth to preach the word of God. In his mouth it was likened to a hammer, breaking the hardest rocks. A noble youth of the Piccolomini, a student and poet, stood listening in the Piazza del Campo when he preached there in 1427.

"He moved me so much"—he wrote years after—"that I, too, nearly entered his order"; this listener was Aeneas Silvius, later to become the famous Pope Pius II. "He had"—says Vespasiano da Bisticci, of S. Bernardino—"a wondrous power in persuading men to lay aside their mortal hatreds." In his famous sermons in the Campo, in August and September of 1427, just after he had refused the Bishopric of Siena, he appealed to these Sieneſe to lay aside their party hatreds. "Ah! my children, no longer follow these parties, for you ſee to what they bring us. . . Be at peace in your own home. . . Ah! for the love of God, love one another. Alas! ſee you not that if you love the deſtruction one of the other, what followeth therefrom? ſee you not that you are ruining your very ſelves? Ah! put this thing right, for the love of God! Do not leave it for God to lay His hands upon you with His ſcourge; for if you leave it for Him to do you will be chaſtiſed. . . Love one another!" His influence within the old city, where his emblem, his ſacred monogram—ſet over her Palace in place of the Viſconti ſerpent—is yet often to be ſeen, muſt have been a wonderful inſpiration, breathing concord, peace, God's love: continually his ſaintly aſcetic figure appears through the Sieneſe paintings of this age, in none more than thoſe of Sano di Pietro, a man of devotionaſ impuſe, "*homo*"—we are told of him—"totus deditus Deo," who, like Vecchietta, had painted the Saint he loved holding in his hand the name of Jeſus, with the legend "*Manifestavi nomen tuum hominibus.*"

Not leſs, but perhaps even more, does the wonderful figure of S. Catherine fill the ſtory of Siena in that age, and inſpire her art creation. Born among the large family (1347) of a poor dyer of Fontebranda at Siena, nothing could keep her from her vocation to the religious life; and entering the order of Dominican ſiſters of Penance, with the white robe of purity and black mantle of humility, ſhe remained for years dead to the world outside, abſorbed in that myſtic union which ſhe has deſcribed in her "Dialogue of the Soul with Chriſt." Within her father's houſe ſhe had found "the deſert, a ſolitude in the miſt of people"; but now in her viſions "Chriſt ſtood continually by her ſide; with Him ſhe walked familiarly . . . ſhe ſmelt the fragrance of unearthly

lilies, and heard the celestial music of Paradise" . . . and at last the divine word came to her—"I will espouse thee to myself in perfect faith." Then from her utter seclusion she came back to the world, but dead henceforth to the world, her soul aflame with that message of love, "to stand among men dying of the plague, to preach to mobs athirst for vengeance, to reconcile divided families and civil strife, to mingle in the highest political life of her epoch,"—to become the greatest character and influence for good of that age she lived in.¹

Her simple home in Fontebranda on the hillside became—and still is—a shrine sacred to her memory; upon the art of Siena, in this time and later, her influence, her personality was a thing inspiring, purifying, uplifting. It was Lorenzo Vecchietta, who painted her figure (signed and dated 1461) in the Hall of the great Council in the Palazzo Pubblico; and Neroccio, or Francesco di Giorgio himself, who, in her own home (above the high altar of the lower church) carved in wood and painted that most beautiful statue of this Saint, crowned with her veil and wearing the robe of S. Dominic. Even Andrea Vanni, who had taken a leading part in the expulsion of the nobles in 1368, and had painted on the Public Palace the arms of the Duke of Milan, found time to paint within S. Domenico the likeness of the Saint, which is of value as a direct and personal impression²; and who that has visited the great Dominican church can forget the scenes of her life and visions which are among the most supreme creations of Sodoma's genius?

So we find that through all this time, and even later, apart from that tradition of her art which centred around Mary, the ancient city's Patron and Queen, drawing its finely decorative sense of hieratic splendour from as far back as Duccio and Simone, there came to join this a devotional Catholic impulse, inspired by the great Saints of Siena and finding expression in new and lovely forms of artistic creation. Both Matteo di Giovanni and Vecchietta were lay brothers of the Spedale, the great

¹ See my "Renaissance in Italian Art," Part VII—"Leonardo at Milan," where I speak of this Saint in connection with the paintings of Sodoma.

² Cf. Rio (*op. cit.*), ch. I, p. 143-4.

Hospital of the Scala, the former a *ferveroso fratello*, and holding high office in the Confraternity of S. Jerome, which was attached to the Hospital; in which Vecchietta, too, took a devoted interest, and on his death in 1480 bequeathed to its poor all his goods. Thus to the special cult of Virgin Mary, Queen and Patroness of Siena, there had come to be added this pure and noble impulse of Christian charity, inspired by two saintly memories; and Sano di Pietro, in his great altarpiece from the convent of S. Girolamo, now in the Siena Gallery, beside the Virgin and the Child has set SS. Bernardino and Catherine of Siena among her attendant Saints.

But the Virgin Queen remains yet in her assured place, as the city's "true feudal Lord, guardian, defender and safeguard—*vera domina, custos, defensio et presidium nostrum*." To her heavenly advocacy Siena turns again and again in the hour of peril; in time of earthquake our Francesco's *tavoletta* depicts her protecting care, and yet again (Gabella 1480, mentioned above) as commending the city to her Son; and there soon followed the solemn rededication of the city in 1483, repeated in that hour of danger and victory of 1526, when the Sieneſe, ſure of her help, went forth to the Porta Camollia and Fontebranda, and yet again routed the Florentines. Last of all, in that long agony of her ſiege and fall, when, ſurrounded by the armies of Charles V and Duke Cosimo, Siena turns once more in thoſe laſt terrible days (March 24, 1555) to her heavenly protectreſs,—but this time to find "the heavens were dumb."

The great yearly "feſta" of the Palio is in the Virgin's honour—*tribus diebus ante feſtum Sancte Marie de Auguſto*—on the feaſt of her Aſſumption¹; and perhaps no painter—not even Raphael himſelf—has given a more fascinating ſucceſſion of paintings of the Virgin and Child, "one more lovely than another, like roſes on a tree in June," than the Sieneſe Neroccio de'Landi; while his partner, Francesco di Giorgio, was creating his viſion of Madonna crowned by her Son, with attendant Saints and angels, which came to the Siena Gallery from the Spedale della Scala, or within S. Domenico ſhowing

¹ Cf. W. Heywood. "Palio and Ponte." Ch. III, The Feſtival of Our Lady of Auguſt.

her, in robe brodered with gold, kneeling with clasped hands and intense eyes beside her sleeping Babe. Together the two craftsmen were working in their *bottega* in Siena, pouring forth these treasures of their art; while Pandolfo Petrucci, known as "The Magnificent," was soon to return to their city, and give some hope of escape, in one strong man's rule, from her ceaseless civil discords.

CHAPTER II

THE BOTTEGA AT SIENA

INTO this tumultuous, emotional Siena of the mid-XVth century, with her civil discords, her religious revivalism, her Renaissance culture, her wonderful art creation—was born on September 23 of 1439, Francesco di Giorgio, son of Giorgio Martini, a poulterer (*pollajuolo*) of the city. The entry of his baptism is found in the register of that year,¹ and shows his father to have been a humbler citizen—not one privileged to share in the magistracy of the city.

Among his contemporaries in Sienese art were Matteo di Giovanni (born about 1435), Benvenuto di Giovanni (b. 1436), and Neroccio de'Landi (b. 1447), who was to become his partner, as we shall find shortly; a little earlier, but well within his time (b. 1412), was that fine craftsman Lorenzo Vecchietta, with the devotional Sano di Pietro—the Fra Angelico of Siena (1406–81)—and that interesting painter Stefano di Giorgio, called Sassetta. At Florence, Cosimo de'Medici, in these years following his return from exile (1434), was becoming every day more powerful, and gathering round himself a brilliant group of scholars, sculptors, architects and painters, among whom Niccolò de'Niccoli, Poggio Bracciolini, Ghiberti, Brunelleschi, Michelozzo, Donatello may be mentioned. At Rome the scholar and humanist, Tommaso di Sarzana, in whom learning itself assumed the tiara, had in 1447 succeeded Eugenius IV, and was busied in forming the great Vatican Library; at Naples, Alfonso of Aragon, as well as the princely rulers of Ferrara, Mantua and Urbino, gave their fullest sympathy and patronage to art and letters.

It was the epoch when—as Col. Rocchi justly remarks —“the world seemed ready to renew itself, and become young again in the sunshine of Italian culture; when the

¹ F. Donati, in his “Francesco di Giorgio Martini,” published 1902, on the 4th centenary of the death of the Sienese Master, quotes from “Nuovi Documenti sulla Storia dell'Arte Senese” (Borghesi e Banchi) the actual baptismal register of the year 1439. “*Francischo Maurisio di Giorgio di Martino pollaiolo si battezzo a'di XXIII di Settembre, fu comare monna Gemma di Bindo Tosini di Brolio.*” The mistake of Carlo Promis as to date of birth, confuted by Milanese in his note on Vasari's Life of the artist, I refer to later on in this chapter.

Italians knew by learning to free themselves and Europe from the shackles of the Middle Ages, and, drinking deep from the founts of classic inspiration, to almost rise to the antique grandeur. In that epoch all the impulse was towards the antique world, and the imitation of the ancients became the foundation of the moral, political and artistic consciousness of the Italians of the Renaissance. The sovereigns would fain imitate Cæsar and Augustus; the Republicans, Brutus; the philosophers, Aristotle and Plato; the captains of adventure, Hannibal and Scipio; the men of letters, Cicero and Virgil; the architects, Vitruvius."

That Francesco di Giorgio fully shared in this passion for the antique past we shall see later in his profound study of the ancient monuments, in the words of his "Trattato d'Architettura"; but in his early days of youth he had evidently a hard struggle against poverty and the pressure of material needs, and he has borne witness to this himself in the preface to his great work on architecture. "In those years"—he tells us—"I did not resolve myself to that to which my own nature inclined me, but more often, moved by reason not dependent on bodily inclinations, I was occupied in some more common and mechanical art, hoping by this means, with less burden of the spirit, if not of the body, to be able to supply the necessities of physical nourishment." And this resolve he took "after seeing that those who had given their attention to such studies, though men of high parts (*eccellenti*) have not acquired so much as to prevent their life being most wretched"; but in spite of this reasoning the impulse towards art creation was too strong to be overridden or neglected—"and desiring to arrive at perfection in the art of design and architecture, I made the firm resolve to spare myself no fatigue which I saw to be necessary to attain that end."

Through this intense study and passion for perfection Francesco, without doubt, placed himself before long in a more secure position; but the fact that he started life as a poor man, and had—as we shall see later—a large family to provide for, may have influenced him in the direction towards which he turned his rare artistic acquirements; and possibly even have led him away—to our lasting loss—

from that art of painting in which we shall find him to have made such a brilliant beginning. So that Vasari—as Milanesi points out—may be overstating the case when he says of our Francesco that “being a person endowed no less with good natural powers than a rare genius he worked not for love of money (*per avarizia*), but for his own pleasure (*per suo piacere*) when it suited him (*quando bene gli veniva*), and in order to leave after him some honoured memory.” The author of the famous “Lives” goes on to add—though giving the first place to Francesco’s work in sculpture—“he gave his attention also to painting, and made several things; but not like his sculptures.” It is these “several things” which will occupy us in the present chapter, and which we shall find worthy of very careful attention; but first we must allude to certain points of his private life, which probably reacted indirectly upon his art.

In 1467 our artist seems to have married a certain Cristofana Taddei, since we find that, on November 13, 1467, Francesco di Giorgio Martini painter received, from Cristofano Taddei da Campagnatico, 200 florins as dowry of his daughter Cristofana;¹ but this marriage, if it took place, was very shortly after terminated, for in January of 1469 he married Agnese di Antonio di Benedetto Neroccio, of Siena, who gave him seven children, and survived him.

The marriage seems to have been a happy one, and as we have seen, blessed with children; and it was possibly this marriage which had brought him in these years into partnership with that delightful Siennese painter and sculptor Neroccio di Bartolommeo de’Landi, with whom Francesco shared as partner a bottega at Siena till they dissolved partnership in 1475. It has been suggested that both artists had learned their art of painting from Guasparre d’Agostino, from whose hand were some frescoes behind the high altar of S. Giovanni, and panels elsewhere; and again that Francesco’s master was that fine craftsman,

¹ Cf. Romagnoli “Biografie degli Artisti Senesi”; and, for the later marriage with Agnese, Borghesi e Banchi, *op. cit.* On January 26, 1486, Giorgio Martini and his son Francesco acknowledged receipt from Ant. Benedicti Neroccio of 300 florins of 4 lbs. per flor; “*dote domine Agnetis filie dicti Antonii et future uxoris dicti Francisci*”—“the future wife,” but the marriage must have followed very shortly.

both in sculpture, painting and architecture, Lorenzo Vecchietta. There can be little doubt that our artist was profoundly influenced, in these first receptive years, both by Vecchietta and the other artists then working in Siena; in sculpture and architecture Pietro Minella and Antonio Federighi, in painting Domenico di Bartolo—who had lately completed (1440-4) his frescoes in the Hospital of S. Maria della Scala, for which Francesco now painted his great *Coronation of the Virgin*—and his contemporaries Stefano di Giorgio, called Sassetta, Benvenuto di Giovanni, Sano di Pietro, and that delightful Siennese painter, Matteo di Giovanni; while it is evident to our study that some of his most beautiful creations in painting of this period, though always independent, show qualities of similarity with those of his partner Neroccio.

We may dismiss as not very important the story that our young artist, some two years (1471) after his marriage, was fined 25 lire (in lieu of three months confinement) for some prank played by him, with ten other companions, on the good monks of Lecceto; and as quite improbable that of his having been employed, as a youth, on the Duomo of Orvieto. Brought forward by Padre della Valle, in his history of that Cathedral, this story is, to my mind, completely refuted by Gaetano Milanesi in his note on Vasari's life of our artist. Even Carlo Promis, in his magnificent edition, published in 1841, of Francesco di Giorgio's "*Trattato d'Architettura Civile e Militare*"—which I had recently an opportunity of studying within the Biblioteca Comunale of Siena—finds it difficult to understand how this artist, born—as we have seen—in 1439, could in 1447, at the age of eight or nine, be already employed upon the Fabbrica of the Duomo of Orvieto. "But," says Milanesi, "we can completely settle this difficulty, having twice had the opportunity of examining, and that very carefully, the books of the archives of that Cathedral, from which we have gathered that in those times there was working in Orvieto a Francesco da Siena, the son of Stefano. Whence it is to be concluded that Della Valle made a mistake, confusing this latter with Francesco di Giorgio."¹

¹ Cf. "*Le Vite de piu Eccellenti Pittori, Scultori ed Architetti*," scritte da Giorgio Vasari. Con nuove annotazione e commenti i di Gaetano Milanesi. Editore, G. C. Sansoni, 1878, Vol. III, p. 69.

The partnership between our artist and Neroccio de Landi lasted till 1475, when it was formally dissolved; and it is to be noted that Francesco in all documents of this period, is described as painter. It has been suggested—as we have seen—that both artists may have studied together under Guasparre d'Agostino,¹ author of certain frescoes behind the high altar of S. Giovanni at Siena, and of a panel of small figures in the Sacristy of the Duomo which represents S. Bernardino preaching. I myself incline much more strongly to the view that Francesco may rather have owed his instruction—both in sculpture and painting, and even possibly in architecture and the elements of military engineering—to that finely characteristic Sienese master of his time, Lorenzo Vecchietta. Lorenzo di Pietro, called Vecchietta, born in 1412, was considerably the senior of our artist; and was actually his arbitrator or assessor when he dissolved partnership with Neroccio, who had Sano di Pietro on his side, the two umpires being chosen to arrange matters and decide “*omnes lites inter eos vertentes occasione societatis quam simul habuerunt in arte pictoria.*”²

Lorenzo Vecchietta—whose Life is taken by Vasari together with that of Francesco di Giorgio—was a fine Sienese master of this middle XVth century; even more famous perhaps—as Rio suggests—as sculptor than as painter. But in this latter branch of art Vecchietta is by no means to be overlooked, as we may see from his frescos at Siena in her great Hospital, the Spedale della Scala, in whose good work we have already seen that he took a deep personal interest. The Spedale itself is a part of old Siena; there is no other hospital like it in the world. It goes back by tradition as far as the year 898, when a poor bootmaker, by name Sorore, who was wont to offer shelter to pilgrims on their way to Rome, began its good work; by document certainly to A.D. 1090, when it was already known as the Spedale;³ and facing the Cathedral, before her very steps, took its name and device from that position—“*ante gradus Sancte Marie.*” In the Middle Ages and later it

¹ Cf. Donati, *op. cit.*, page 9.

² V. Milanesi, Documenti II, 466.

³ V. Siena. I.R.R. Spedali Riuniti di S. Maria della Scala. Guida Storica Artistica.

was famous, admired by the Emperor Sigismund, a model for other hospitals of Tuscany and the Papal States, and held many lands and townships around Siena, of which Spedaletto still remains with her towers and embattled walls; and, naturally in those times, it had soon become a shrine of art, adorned by all the famous painters of Siena, from Duccio and Lorenzetti down to Beccafumi and Sodoma. Many of these works have perished or been removed to the Gallery, but the frescos of Domenico di Bartolo yet remain undisturbed in the great Hall of the Pellegrinaio, and Vecchietta has other frescos here; besides his noble bronze of the *Risen Christ* in the chapel, which once (as we shall see later) must have contained on its walls Francesco di Giorgio's great *Coronation of the Virgin*. All these painters worked in and for the great Spedale, some—like Matteo di Giovanni and Vecchietta himself—as brothers (*fratelli*) of the order, giving all their spare time from art to the care of its poor and sick. And to this day the old Spedale still stands, with open doors fronting that wonderful Cathedral; made dear to us by the memories of those who gave to it their lives for the sake of Christ's mercy, but carrying on into our present time its good work of care and healing, with all the priceless help of modern science.

In connection with this same devotional impulse, which is so strong a feature in Vecchietta's art, may be mentioned here his portrait of S. Bernardino in the Siena Gallery holding in his hands the holy name of Jesus, and with the legend "I have made manifest thy name to men" (*manifestavi nomen tuum hominibus*); nor less delightful in feeling and refined in treatment is his beautiful full-length portrait of S. Catherine of Siena, within the Palazzo Pubblico of her own city. As a sculptor perhaps his greatest achievement was his famous Tabernacle in bronze, designed by him for the chapel of his beloved Spedale; but which was eventually to find a place on the high altar of Siena Cathedral, flanked on either side by Francesco di Giorgio's bronze angels. It is to be noted that Vecchietta was also a military architect—the profession in which his pupil Martini was to follow him with such signal success—and that the design is his of Montacuto, while he had charge of Orbetello, Talamone, and other Siennese strongholds.

Crowe and Cavalcaselle—writers whose attitude is not too friendly or sympathetic to our artist's work and painting—remark of Francesco's art of this period,¹ "he seems to have combined most of the Sienese characteristics of his time with a fancy" (and this is a point of special interest, to which I shall return later) "akin to Botticelli, and a fashion of drapery like that of the Pollaiuoli. He inherited defects already conspicuous in Vecchietta, such as slender, withered and angular figures, the action of which is rendered in an awkward and often pompously affected manner. He may therefore have learnt the elements from that master." These writers then continue—"the strange conceits in his composition are surprising and unpleasant. The superabundance of ornament in dress and buildings is another of his failings. His tone is cold, unrelieved, flat and grey in shadow."

The points of special interest in the above criticism are in their reference to Botticelli and Vecchietta; but on the other points raised, we may, I think, justly feel that this somewhat dry and hard precision of the Sienese painters of the time is more than counterbalanced—notably in the art of Vecchietta, Matteo di Giovanni, Sano di Pietro, Neroccio and of Francesco himself—by other qualities which are more fully appreciated by our own generation. If the remarks just quoted about Francesco's art seem unduly severe—almost conceived in a hostile spirit—what shall we say of those which follow; when, in speaking of that delightful Sienese painter, Neroccio de' Landi, in connection with a work of singular charm, his *Virgin and Child between SS. Michael and Bernardino*, signed and dated 1476, and now in the Siena Gallery, the same writers say: "Its style varies little from that of Vecchietta or Francesco di Giorgio, except that the affected attitudes are perhaps more absolutely unnatural in their bend than theirs, and appear to caricature more markedly the action of plastic works of the olden time. Light washy colours are confined by dry outlines; and the human form, taken as a model for delineation, is coarse and vulgar."² But the wonderful charm, unique in their attraction, of these Madonna panels in the Siena Academy has received more

¹ Cf. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. III, p. 66.

² Cf. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

just treatment in our own time by a great critic of Italian painting, when he writes of this same master—"As for Neroccio, why, he was Simone come to life again. Simone's singing line, Simone's endlessly refined feeling for beauty, Simone's charm and grace—you lose but little of them in Neroccio's panels and you get what to most of us counts more, ideals and emotions more akin to our own, with quicker suggestions of freshness and joy."¹

It might be interesting at this point to try for a moment to analyse the qualities which lie behind this attraction of the Sienese masters of the XVth century—qualities of attraction which the Victorians seem thus sometimes to have entirely missed, and to which our own age (and here the markets are no bad test) is far more sympathetic and appreciative. The feeling of lovely line, of hieratic splendour in rich material and decoration (the gold background still very generally preserved) had come right down from Duccio, through Segna, Simone, the Lorenzetti, Taddeo and Domenico di Bartolo in a direct line to Vecchietta, Matteo di Giovanni and his contemporaries Sano di Pietro, Neroccio and Francesco di Giorgio. But with the elements just mentioned there is frequently combined—and we shall find this in both Neroccio and Francesco himself—a fresh and most pure beauty of type; it breaks through in that *Virgin Annunciate* of Simone in the Uffizi Gallery, it comes to us, almost a vision of the antique beauty, in the white-robed *Peace* of Lorenzetti in the Public Palace of Siena, as in the Saints and Virgins of Matteo di Giovanni; and yet again—to my mind in an exceptional manner—in the *Virgin and Child* enthroned with singing and playing child angels, by Benvenuto di Giovanni, a contemporary of both Neroccio and Francesco, whose influence may very probably have reached our artist.² Lastly here—and this is by no means the least important factor—we must think of the devotional tradi-

¹ Cf. Berenson. "Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance," pp. 55-6.

² This most attractive painting, signed and dated 1475, has now disappeared from the Gallery, to be practically lost to the world in a small country church in Tuscany. I consider myself fortunate in having been able to include this painting among my illustrations in "The Republic of Siena," Part II, Renaissance in Italian Art.



*By F. di
Giorgio]*

4 VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH ANGEL.

[SIENA
GALLERY.

tion in Sienese painting, the special cult of Mary Virgin, heavenly advocate and protectress of Siena; we must remember that the same city had felt, even amid her civil discords, the spiritual influence of the presence and vivifying life and words of S. Catherine and S. Bernardino; and, that, as I have just said, many of these very painters themselves—Vecchietta, Matteo, Sano di Pietro—gave up the best of their art and lives to the service of the poor and suffering in the great Spedale. All these elements enter most certainly into the yet primitive but most attractive painting of Siena of this time; they are part of its spiritual atmosphere; they breathe into it that quality, which we feel, we love,—but cannot precisely define. Where the foreign—more especially the Florentine—influence does break through, even in this very time, is in the sister art of sculpture. For here no other than Donatello himself, breaking this wall of jealous reserve, comes to work within Siena in the Baptistery of S. Giovanni; in whose font, yet earlier, the genius of Giacomo della Quercia—as in his wonderful Fonte Gaia of the Piazza—had heralded the fullest art of the Renaissance.

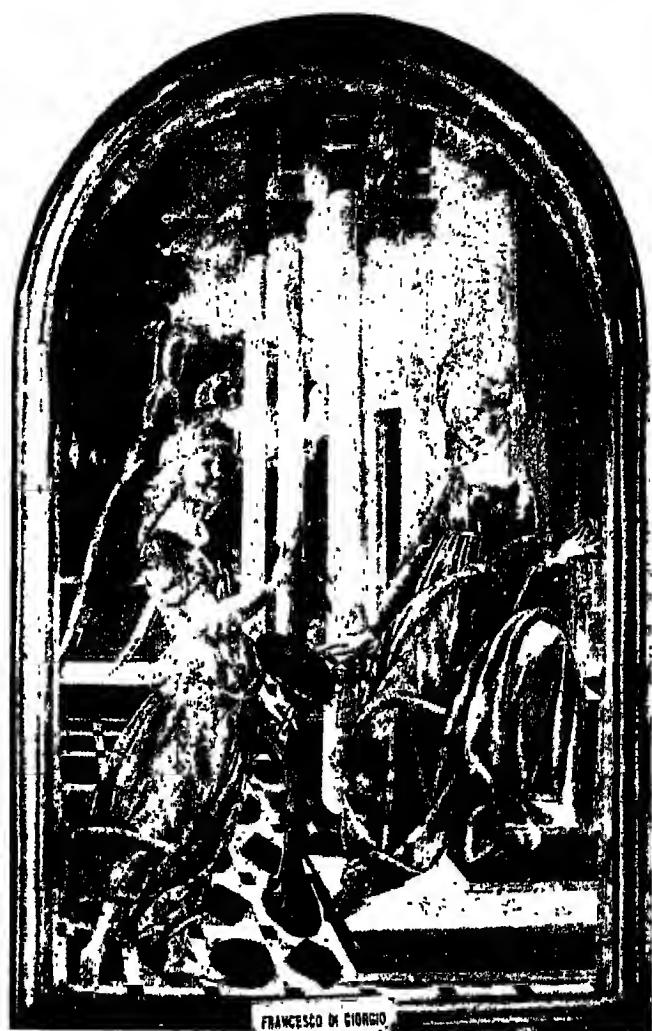
To this subject I shall return, later; and confine myself in this chapter more directly to the pictorial art of Francesco Martini. To the first period of his career, when he was working beside Neroccio in their joint bottega at Siena, belong most of those paintings which are in the Siena Gallery. We may here follow his development from the Virgin who holds the Divine Child on her knees between two Saints—which comes from the Spedale, and may be considered a secure work of the master—from the beautiful and characteristic *Virgin and Child with Angel*, and the less certain and satisfactory *Virgin and Child with SS. Peter and Paul*,¹ half figures upon a background of gold, to the later and more complex *Coronation of the Virgin* and the delightful *Nativity*, both painted for the monks of Montoliveto. Between these, and within the

¹ This Madonna with SS. Peter and Paul is rejected by Rossi and Franchi ("Le Pitture di Francesco di Giorgio," 1902) as "not by his hand, although approaching the manner of Francesco"; but accepted by Crowe and Cavalcaselle and Berenson, with whose judgment I fully agree. The Virgin is characteristic, the Child very weak and doll-like in his flowered tunic, which has been repainted.

same period, we may place the *Annunciation* of the Siena Gallery, with its vehement movement—notably in the figure of Gabriel, and the startled gesture of the listening Mary—and its fantastic architectural background; a painting full of charm, showing already (in spite of exaggerated perspective), the interest of the artist in architectural forms, and which we may judge as securely his work. Somewhat less certain, however, are the interesting scenes of three panels in the same Gallery, painted in tempera and in a very bad state of preservation, representing the *Story of Chaste Susanna*, taking a bath in her garden and watched by the elder from behind an ilex tree, of the scene of *Joseph sold by his Brethren* and the same Patriarch's experiences with the wife of Potiphar the Egyptian; panels which I myself have put down to Martini, and, with the support of very good authorities, remain still of the same opinion.¹ With the above mentioned *Virgin and Child with SS. Peter and Paul*, may be here compared the child, dressed also in a little frock, of the panel under Francesco di Giorgio now included in our National Gallery Collection, its subject *S. Dorothy* leading the heavenly child by the hand. Here the Saint, a charming fair-haired girl, in mantle of milky rose colour, stands against a richly tooled background; the child, who holds the basket of fruit and flowers of Paradise intended for Theophilus, is weak in drawing and possibly repainted in the face and dress. This panel—which may be itself an early work from the Siena bottega—came from the Bandini collection at Florence, was sold at Christie's in 1899, and came thence to the Gallery in the same year as a "*Virgin and Child*."

We come now, leaving these lesser works, to two paintings of the first importance in the Siena Academy, indisputably by our Master and in which he puts forth his fullest powers. First of these must come the great *Coronation of the Virgin* now in the Siena Gallery, catalogued as coming from the Spedale della Scala; a subject always welcome, for reasons which I have already detailed,

¹ Here again I find it difficult to agree with P. Rossi and A. Franchi when they say that these quaint and delightful panels, accepted by other leading authorities, do not show any of the characteristics of our painter, though certainly by some artist of his time.



By F. di Giorgio]

5 THE ANNUNCIATION.

[SIENA GALLERY.

to Sienese art. This work—mentioned by Milanese in his note on Vasari's life of Francesco—was commissioned from that artist by the Olivetan monks of Montoliveto di Chiusuri; and here it may be well to clear up a possible confusion which seems to have affected even Milanese himself in his "Documenti." In 1471 Francesco di Giorgio had painted this same subject of the *Coronation of Madonna* for the Spedale, on the wall of the chapel near the high altar ("sul muro della capeletta a capo dell'altar maggiore");¹ but it is not likely that he would have repeated the same subject on panel for the same place. On the other hand we have the clear story of the panel (1472) and of its payment in the records of Montoliveto, as being intended for the new chapel then erected in honour of SS. Sebastian and Catherine of Siena, whose figures actually appear kneeling together in the lowest tier of this great picture. What happened was probably that this panel, with other similar objects, had found its way to the Spedale; and came from thence to be deposited, in 1817, in the Siena Gallery. And here—it has been said—"we can better observe what he" (Francesco) "has taken from the Sienese school, and what personal imprint he had brought there from his own initiative. It is the work in which, most of all, his characteristic manner may be known and stands revealed."²

Tier above tier the great composition towers up, to culminate in the group of Madonna kneeling to receive her crown from the hands of the enthroned Saviour. Yet above them, wrapped in clouds, the Eternal Father bestows his blessing. Beside the kneeling S. Sebastian and S. Catherine, in the lowest tier stand two most beautiful female Saints; while above them rise the ranks of the Saints and Fathers of the Church, with many figures of monks, among whom are included the great founders of the Olivetan order. Far above these, on the same level

¹ V. Milanese, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

² V. P. Rossi and A. Franchi, *op. cit.*, p. 72, who there give the whole record of this panel. It is only fair to Milanese to state here that he mentions, as well as the *Coronation* on the walls of the Spedale chapel, that now in the Gallery from Montoliveto di Chiusuri. Meanwhile, we may ask, what of this first *Coronation* upon the walls of the Spedale chapel, whose choir is now covered with later frescoes of considerable merit of the eighteenth century?

with Christ and His Mother, with the seated patriarchs and prophets—among them King David with his viol—four lovely angels wait in service, rose-crowned and fair-haired, like those of the Umbrian Bonfigli, in whose celestial forms Francesco's imagination finds its purest and happiest flight. In our admiration for this glorious creation of Sieneſe art, it is only right to mention here points which have been criticised in its composition and treatment; the composition as somewhat overcrowded, the colour and handling—as Milanese writes—"a little hard and dry," the central figures of Christ and Madonna resting on a bank of clouds, supported from below by cherubims and angels, as "a fantasy (*una bizzaria*), rather than a well-planned invention." But ſuch defects are more than atoned for by the beauty of type among individual figures, the vigorous and daring treatment of the whole composition; above all, by the upſoaring of the painter's ſoul, that perfume of myſtic devotion which yet lingers around this panel of the Sieneſe maſter.

This work evidently pleaſed his monaſtic patrons, for it was promptly followed by another commiſſion from their order—this time from the Olivetans from without Porta Tuſi of Siena. The details of this important commiſſion have ſurvived in a "memoria" within the convent records. "To Maſtro Francesco di Giorgio was allotted on this 12th day of April 1475, to paint an altar piece (*tavola d'altare*) . . . of the *Nativity of Our Lord*, and it muſt be finiſhed with all the parts requiſite in a fair panel by a good maſter, and muſt be provided to come to us within a year, and we muſt give for his payment 50 florins; and he muſt ſupply all the colours and gold, except the panel which we pay for. But if he ſhould make it of ſuch beauty that it be valued at more than the above price we muſt then give him 10 florins more."

This painting, one of the Maſter's fineſt works, repreſents the familiar ſcene of the *Nativity*. In the foreground the little baby Jeſus reſts on a rich cuſhion, with behind him S. Joſeph, ſeated a little awkwardly in poſe; and at his ſide the Virgin kneels in prayer, perhaps one of the moſt beautiful figures Martini has ever painted. Behind her two angels, embracing with arms linked, wait in attendance, and are balanced on the other ſide of the



By F. di Giorgio]

6 CORONATION OF VIRGIN.

[SIRNA GALLERY.

panel by two kneeling monks, who were originally S. Benedict and S. Thomas Aquinas, but have been changed, in their names and emblems, by a later hand, to represent S. Bernardino and the Beato Ambrogio Sanse- doni. The background of an antique building in ruins, sheltering the traditional animals, and a beautiful circular temple, even if somewhat inappropriate to the subject, are to be specially noted as showing already at this time the artist's growing interest in ancient architecture; behind a valley winds away to the distant hills, and on a slip of parchment, which escapes from a book of devotion on the ground, is the signature FRANCISC.GEORGII. PINXIT.¹ Here then we have an undoubted work of the Master, of first importance and great beauty and one of the gems of the Siena Gallery, which shows a technical advance—although its perspective may be criticised—in handling of the drapery, colour and composition, even on the great panel of the *Coronation*. Yet again he was to repeat the same subject—not a frequent one with the Siene- se painters—in a panel which may be considered as his greatest achievement in painting; but before I come to this I wish to mention a disputed work of great interest, which has been claimed for him in the same Gallery. This is the large panel, painted in tempera, representing *Christ on the way to Calvary*, at one time attributed in the catalogue to “an unknown follower of Francesco di Giorgio.” Crowe and Cavalcaselle find in it “features assignable to a continuator of Francesco di Giorgio's manner”; and in my own work on the Siene- se I mention this altar-piece of the Passion as being “so diverse in manner from Francesco elsewhere that I include this in my list with a query.” On the other hand, the authors above mentioned (P. Rossi and A. Franchi) are disposed to approve its attribution, “at least in part,” to Francesco di Giorgio.²

¹ Cf. P. Rossi and A. Franchi (*op. cit.*) who state that this panel was painted in oil in certain parts, the temple in the background being, however, in tempera. In 1755 it was still on the altar near the Sacristy of S. Benedetto ai Tuffi. This monastery was destroyed in 1840, and the painting came to the Siena Academy.

² Cf. Crowe and Cavalcaselle (*op. cit.*), Vol. III, p. 67. Selwyn Brinton, “The Republic of Siena (Part II, Renaissance in Italian Art) Analysis,” and P. Rossi and A. Franchi (*op. cit.*).

This painting represents Christ being stripped of his robes by three brutal executioners, while at the side is the Virgin herself attended by the Magdalen with the other Maries and S. John; a group balanced on the other side by an old bearded man, whom I suggest to be Joseph of Arimathea. In the background, on the hillside, Christ is being nailed to the cross; while one of the thieves is already raised for crucifixion, with many watching figures around. In the distance are the walls of Jerusalem; and nearer, trees in the Umbrian manner are outlined against the sky. The writers just quoted hold the view that the lower portion, or principal subject, including the Christ and Virgin with attendant Maries, is by Francesco's own hand, and the middle distance and background (*parte superiore*) by a later and inferior artist; and I consider there is much to be said for this attribution. Certainly the group of the Virgin, draped in blue with clasped hands, is beautifully conceived, the undraped Christ finely drawn, the bearded old man not unlike some of those in the *Coronation* and other authenticated paintings; but the whole treatment has just those defects of being dry in manner and hard (*maniera secca ed arida*) which we have already seen brought against Francesco, and if—even in part—by his hand may be assigned to his youth and early manhood. Here, too, I may mention in the same Gallery a figure of the *Virgin Annunciate*—a fragment of an *Annunciation*—catalogued there as by “an unknown follower of Francesco di Giorgio”; but which is given to that Master “with certainty” (*con sicurezza*) by the authors just quoted.¹ They add here that the manner of our painter may be recognized in the type of the Virgin, but the drapery, which should be blue, is completely scraped off; this work came, with other works by Sano di Pietro, to the Gallery from the Convent of the Osservanza, with which we shall later find Francesco to have been so intimately connected.

We come now to a masterpiece of Francesco di Giorgio's art in the *Nativity* within the great church of S. Domenico at Siena. Years ago, when as a very young student I had first reached Siena, with my enthusiasm for Italian art not yet corrected by knowledge, I was at once completely fascinated by this painting; and spent many happy hours

¹ V. P. Rossi and A. Franchi, *op. cit.*



By F. di Giorgio]

7 NATIVITY.

[SIENA GALLERY.]

in copying it within the vast shadowy church, which contains near by that lovely chapel painted by Sodoma with scenes from the life and mystic visions of S. Catherine, as well as in a chapel of the transept one of the jewels (*Coronation of S. Barbara*) of Matteo's art. At that time this *Nativity* was—as I remember—attributed to Luca Signorelli, a friend and contemporary of Martini, whose vigour of handling and splendour of angelic forms do offer certain affinities with our Sienese Master, though their whole outlook on art was different. With Francesco the passion for the structural beauty of the nude form,—which is with Luca a dominant note—is never markedly apparent; and here his pure soul has given us a lyrical poem which perhaps has never been equalled, even in the many renderings of this beloved subject within the records of Italian art. The Virgin here, as in his *Nativity* of the Siena Gallery, kneels with clasped hands before the divine Babe; who, a little dimpled naked thing of soft curves, again rests upon a cushion in the foreground, set against a marble slab. Mary herself is not Francesco's type of his Madonna panels; approaching, however, closely in type, attitude and arrangement of drapery to her namesake of the Gallery *Nativity*; though here the drapery is in broader and bolder folds, and her outer robe is starred with a lovely bordering of gold. Behind her are the shepherds, wild swarthy figures armed with staves; and both these and the figure balancing them of the seated S. Joseph have something of that exaggerated movement which we find in Filippino Lippi's frescoes of S. Maria Novella, and which had perhaps led to the Signorelli attribution to which I have alluded. But the two angels, grouped behind S. Joseph, belong entirely to Francesco's own feeling and could be by no other hand. Resembling in their lovely grouping, with arms entwined, those of the Gallery *Nativity*, they far exceed these—and indeed any other work of our Master—in lyrical beauty of conception. Winged beings, golden-haired and glorious, they tread on air (as is often their wont in the figures of Martini),¹ and seem to have just swept

¹ We shall find this elsewhere significant of Francesco, notably in a lovely drawing of a girl in the Uffizi print-room, of which I made a sketch now before me. She, too, moves as if treading on air; and in the poise of the body and clean folds of the drapery, with their Botticellian character, she resembles the first of these angels of the *Nativity*.

down into the vast dim old church, bringing with them the rustle of celestial wings and the fragrance of the courts of heaven. Behind these figures the background is filled by a magnificent Roman arch of noble proportions, with marble columns and architrave, but broken in the centre to suggest its state of ruin; and at the sides and central opening we get glimpses of stretching Tuscan landscape, while beneath the arch itself the traditional animals, the ox and ass, appear to be penned in by some marble fragments which have fallen to the ground.

Here again we may trace that obsession of the antique past in this period of the Master's art, to which I shall return in the next chapter. The lunette of *Ecce Homo* above this panel is by another hand, and has been attributed to Matteo di Giovanni, and the "gradino" beneath to Bernardino Fungai; but it has been suggested¹ that the actual predella of this *Nativity* is that now in the Uffizi Gallery, showing three stories from the life of S. Benedict, and at present placed there under the name of Neroccio. I should not wish in this matter to take anything from the credit of Neroccio, for whose art creations I have the strongest sympathy and admiration; but a very careful study of this predella in the Uffizi—even before I came across the attribution just quoted—had convinced me that this was a work of Francesco Martini, though most probably from the bottega which he was at that time sharing with Neroccio.² We have only to compare the figures of monks and fathers of the Benedictine order, which we have just studied in the Siena Gallery *Coronation*, with those—sometimes even introduced into the niches of the architecture—within these delightful scenes from the story of S. Benedict in the Uffizi predella, to be convinced of its authorship; and, yet again, I found a female figure in the central panel very characteristic of Francesco, while the elaborate background of Renaissance

¹ V. P. Rossi and A. Franchi, *op. cit.*, p. 79. The actual subject of the Uffizi predella seems to connect itself, however, more closely in its legend of S. Benedict, with the *Nativity* of the Siena Gallery.

² I find this attribution fully supported by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 67; who say "Florence, Uffizi. Three predella scenes show Francesco di Giorgio's defects less than usual . . . We note the neatness of the drawing. The colour is, however, still flat and cold. The subjects from the legend of S. Benedict."



By F. di Giorgio]

8 NATIVITY.

[S. DOMENICO,
AT SIENA.

architecture is no less significant of his design, and may be compared with this side of his work at a later period.

Still keeping within the walls of old Siena we come now to two very interesting panels in her Palazzo Pubblico (Sala del Concistoro) which represent the *Preaching* and *Miracles of S. Bernardino* of Siena. These delightful little panels, giving a faithful rendering of the Piazza in the XVth century, are among those works which must be approached with a certain amount of caution. Interesting in themselves, they are also important as connecting themselves with the painting of the Liverpool Gallery of the same subject (*a Sermon of S. Bernardino*). In my own work on the Sienese Masters I mention all three of these with the panel of the Munich Pinacothek (*Miracle of S. Anthony of Padua*) under Francesco di Giorgio; but added of the two panels of the Siena Palace—"I myself would give these last to his master."¹ A very careful re-examination of the panels, since these words were written, would lead me to qualify this verdict; for coming back to them after a close study of Martini's architectural work in Tuscany and the Marches, I was able to trace details (such as the door in the background of the *Miracle*) which are entirely significant of his design, while the figures themselves are to be compared with those in the Uffizi panel of the story of S. Benedict.²

Leaving now the city we may pass beneath S. Domenico through the gate of Fontebranda, and down a lovely winding valley, to visit the Monastero (once Abbazia di S. Eugenio), now converted into a Villa. There, in an earlier visit, I had found a "Virgin and Child attributed

¹ V. "Republic of Siena," Part II, Renaissance in Italian Art. Francesco di Giorgio, Analysis.

² Rossi and Franchi (*op. cit.*) say that these panels formed a "gradino d'altare," and add "this work is one of the best of our author," i.e. Francesco. Crowe and Cavalcaselle (*op. cit.*, ch. III) say "a sermon and miracle of S. Bernardino—genuine, very careful and a pleasing work of Francesco di Giorgio"; and add "Liverpool Gallery, assigned to Pesellino, is also by Francesco di Giorgio; subject, A sermon of S. Bernardino"; as well as giving the predella—formerly in the Fuller Maitland collection, exhibited at Manchester (*S. Peter and S. John healing the lame man*)—as "Sienese School, by Francesco di Giorgio." Now at Berlin. See List of Paintings on both these last works.

to Fra Angelico, but which to my mind is the work of Francesco." I noted it had been revarnished, and the gold background repainted. On my return to the Monastero, to my regret I found this interesting work had disappeared; and a note by my friend the late William Heywood, in his account of the Monastero, mentioning specially "a pleasing Virgin and Child with two Angels," both explained this mystery and its present domicile.¹

I come now to the paintings of the Master outside Italy, offering material of great interest, but which, to treat at all fully, would take me far beyond the limits of this chapter, and possibly even of the present work; which has, we may recall here, to include this Master's life and creative work not alone as painter, but as sculptor, architect, military engineer and writer on art. I am obliged therefore to refer the reader on this point to my list of Francesco di Giorgio's works in painting at the end of this book, and which will include, whenever possible, references to works which bear on any question of doubtful attribution. I shall, however, permit myself here to mention specially those paintings in private collections, as well as public galleries, which seem to me of outstanding attraction and interest; and first among these I shall take the beautiful *Nativity* in the collection of Sir Herbert Cook at Doughty House, Richmond. This work, which I have had the opportunity of studying very carefully, is a small, very finished painting, almost like a miniature (and we shall see later that our Master was an admirable miniaturist), with the high lights of the trees and shrubs touched with gold. The Virgin, in her traditional crimson robe and blue mantle, kneels with hands clasped in prayer—just as in the Siena painting of this subject,—before the Divine Babe, who lies on a cushion on the grass. Her fair hair falls loose about her shoulders; her delicate oval face is most typical of Martini's art. On the other side S. Joseph seated, balances the composition, and watches thoughtfully the Babe; while the traditional animals are present as

¹ V. Guide to Siena by W. Heywood and Lucy Alcott, p. 412. "It is a matter of regret that most of the pictures which rendered this church of the Monastero so interesting to the visitor . . . have since been sold."

spectators, and the wooded landscape fades away into distant mountains.

Before leaving the Doughty House collection—whence this delightful *Nativity* was exhibited, in the Burlington Fine Arts Club exhibition of Sienese art—I should like to mention another work of no less attraction.¹ Francesco di Giorgio has painted “Cassoni,” or wedding chests, elsewhere, notably in the subjects of his *Rape of Europa* in the Musée du Louvre and the *Story of Tobias*, with the nude upright figures in relief of *Hercules* and *Iole* beside the panel, which was recently in the Nemes collection;² but he is specially interesting in the cassone panel, painted in tempera, of the *Triumph of Chastity* in the Doughty House collection. The subject—a frequent one, which reappears in the Uffizi Gallery panel in compliment to the Duchess of Urbino—is, of course taken from Petrarch’s “Trionfi.” Chastity sits on a car drawn by unicorns; six fair-haired girls, with long robes, follow in her train, their banner showing a weasel or ermine (symbol of chastity) upon a red field; behind them is a background of water and mountains crowned by castles. It may be mentioned that this charming composition is closely allied with another *Triumph of Chastity* belonging to Lady Wantage (exhibited at the Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1902) which—as Professor Langton Douglas has stated—if not painted by Francesco di Giorgio himself, was at any rate executed by some assistant in the bottega kept by him, before 1475, with Neroccio de Landi.

Lastly I shall mention the beautiful draped female figure of *Fidelity*, lately in the collection of Captain Langton Douglas, but which has recently found a new home in the Kahn collection in America. Captain Langton Douglas, by whose kindness I am able to place an illustration before my readers, tells me that “this well-known picture is exceptionally interesting, as it is in fresco, in beautiful

¹ Cf. Berenson (*op. cit.*), and Catalogue of Exhibition of Sienese Art, Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1904.

² Cf. Venturi, “Studi dal Vero,” p. 87, where this author compares the figures and background with those of the *Rape of Europa*, and suggests that it may have come from the Sala del Iole in the Ducal Palace of Urbino. In the recent sale at Amsterdam of the Nemes collection from Buda-Pesth (Nov. 14, 1928) the *Tobias* by Francesco di Giorgio was sold for £1,583.

condition, successfully transferred to canvas, and as it was, no doubt, made to decorate a private apartment in some Sieneſe palace. It comes from a great French (the Chalandon) collection, where it has been much admired by the leading critics on Italian art . . . Francesco di Giorgio was one of the greatest artists of the Renaissance, and this picture, the most charming of his works in the medium of paint, was executed, no doubt, at the time that he shared a studio with Neroccio." Nothing, in fact, could be more characteristic in type than this lovely fair-haired girl poised upon her dog, symbol of fidelity, with her right hand pointing up to the heavens. It is the figure and the very poise which haunts us throughout Francesco's art; which appears in the lovely female saint who stands behind the kneeling S. Catherine in the Siena Gallery *Coronation*, who reappears in the Uffizi drawing I have mentioned;¹ and whom we shall even trace later in the Judith on the marble pavement of the Siena Duomo. She moves to some magic rhythm; she floats to us through space, as if emergent from the frame that would hold her; and, though her feet rest on her faithful canine companion, she, too, really treads on air.

With this painting I shall conclude my chapter on Francesco di Giorgio's painting in this early period of his life and work at Siena; reserving, however, for later treatment his book covers of the *Biccherna* and his work in miniature. In thus leaving him we turn down a page of his life with something like a feeling of pain—at least of lingering regret. We are leaving so much that is individual, beautiful, characteristic—influenced by the old Sieneſe tradition, by Vecchietta, Neroccio and his contemporaries, but also, it might seem, by the Florentine Pollaiuoli, by the spirit (if not the direct attraction) even of Sandro—that we wish, we more than wish, we really crave for more. Had the Master remained contentedly—as he might well have done—in his bottega at Siena, in that house of his facing the old Baptistery, where I have written these very studies of his work, he might, and almost certainly he would, have gone on producing paintings,

¹ This figure of *Fidelity* may also be compared with the intarsia *Pallas* in the Studiolo of Duke Federigo in his Palace of Urbino; v. ch. IV of this work.



By F. di Giorgio]

9 FIDELITY.

[FROM
CHALANDON COLL.

each one more lovely than the last; gaining ever strength and mastery, holding to—even developing—his marvellous type of human beauty, and to that grand old Sieneſe tradition “that nothing can have beginning nor end without theſe three things; without power, without knowledge and without will inſpired by love,”—paintings which would have left our world richer in a priceless heritage of art.

But in theſe complex and brilliant natures—we trace it in all life, without and within ourſelves, we trace it in the Maſter’s own words of himſelf—there comes the inſiſtent claim, almoſt the agony of divided impulse; and already within thoſe mediæval walls of Siena, ancient city of Mary Virgin, even penetrating that guarded circle of her art, there was calling to him, irreſiſtibly, that compelling voice of the New Meſſage, which was to recreate the ſtory of Man and of the world, which we call by the yet magic word—Renaissance. It reached him in the old workshop at Siena. It would not be denied; it got into his very blood; it claimed him for its own. How, and by what diſverſe paths, what difficulties to be met and conquered, what glory of achievement it will be ours to trace in the ſucceeding chapters.

CHAPTER III

THE MESSAGE OF THE PAST

At this point in our story we are faced by a difficult, but most interesting question—when and under what conditions did Francesco di Giorgio first visit Rome?

The awakened interest in that antique past, which was Italy's special heritage and which had never really died away, found expression in this wonderful *quattrocento* not only—as I have remarked in the last chapter—in the world of learning and humanistic culture, but also in the kindred world of art creation; and, more specifically in the careful study of those monuments—and there were yet many in those days—which had survived the barbarian invasions and the ceaseless conflicts of the Middle Ages. These studies were in relations of close sympathy with those of the Humanists themselves; and it has been said of this very time that “while Florence received with manifestations of public rejoicing the discoveries of antique manuscripts, which the famous Humanist, Poggio Bracciolini, was then making in the North of Europe, Rome of the Renaissance was celebrating, with festivals which almost might be compared with those of the antique past, the entry within her walls of some masterpiece of Greek art. . . . It was in this atmosphere”—adds the writer—“steeped thus in classic thought and in the study of classic architecture, whether in the remains of Roman monuments or in the pages of the leader of Latin architects, that the artistic consciousness of Francesco di Giorgio was formed; that consciousness which reveals itself at every moment in his work, and through all the multiform manifestations of his genius.”¹

In the very first years of the *quattrocento* (about 1407), Filippo Brunelleschi, finding the award of the Baptistery Gates of Florence given to his rival Lorenzo Ghiberti, had taken his way south to Rome, with, as his companion, a young sculptor of genius, Donato di Betto Bardi, who—says Vasari—was called by his friends Donatello. “Im-

¹ V. E. Rocchi. *L'Opera e i tempi di Francesco di Giorgio Martini*, p. 6.

mersed in their studies"—I have said elsewhere of these two fellow-students of the past—"caring but little for aught else, we may picture to ourselves these two inspired messengers of a new art, drawing, measuring, noting carefully those wonderful ruins of the past Empire city—every kind of building, temples, round and square or octagonal, basilicas, aqueducts, baths, coliseums, amphitheatres, and every kind of temple of bricks. . . . It was then that he" (Brunelleschi) "put into their places, order by order, the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian; and so deep went his study that his genius remained fully capable of seeing in imagination Rome as she was before she was ruined."¹ "Vasari"—I went on to add—"may have taken and amplified this interesting account, just quoted, of Brunelleschi's stay in Rome from the Life of the Master by Manetti; and it may be observed that many of the antique buildings which he then studied—and which I have seen myself reproduced in the plans and drawings of contemporaries—have since disappeared."

But Brunelleschi, when he returned to Florence—his mind prepared by his study of the vaulting of the Pantheon—to poise high in air the cupola of Santa Maria del Fiore, or create his Chapel of the Pazzi, exquisite in its graceful simplicity; and Donatello, when he, too, came to hand down to us his immortal figures of S. George and the young David, were but precursors of a whole train of architects and sculptors who, for more than a century following, were to devote themselves to the study of the ancient buildings then still remaining in Rome. In 1424 Ciriaco of Ancona, that enthusiast for the past, was busy among the ruins of old Rome; and to him—wrote Stefano Porcari—"Quae superfuerunt veterum monumenta . . . omnia Kyriaco Roma vetusta dedit." In the year 1465, Giuliano di Sangallo was collecting "many designs measured and drawn from the antique" in Rome, the material for a priceless *codex* which still survives. Bramante, Fra Giocondo, Antonio di Sangallo (Giuliano's brother, in Rome 1492-6), Raphael himself, and later Baldassarre Peruzzi were to follow in the same line of study; and, not the least among them, we may include the

¹ V. Selwyn Brinton, "The Golden Age of the Medici," p. 54; making reference to Vasari's Life of Filippo Brunelleschi, II, 337.

exquisite detail, the high importance of the drawings of ancient buildings by Francesco di Giorgio.

It must be remembered here that—as Col. Rocchi justly points out—the scope of the artists in all these drawings was not purely archæological in any way. They were architects, or interested in the antique from that side, and, with Vitruvius in their hand or at the back of their minds, were busied in recovering that architecture, its beautiful forms, its rules and its proportions; and, incidentally, by steeping themselves in those forms, to reveal, to recreate a new architecture for the world they lived in—that exquisite architecture of the early Renaissance, the architecture of Brunelleschi, of Leo Battista Alberti, of Bramante and of our Francesco di Giorgio. But they made use—as we shall see later when we come to a closer study of this latter Master's drawings—of the existing nomenclature. Their studies are in no sense topographic or archæological; though, as I shall point out later, they may possess priceless value for the archæological student which has hardly yet been either recognized or developed. Even in his painting—which we studied in the last chapter—Francesco showed his intense interest in antique buildings, and we have often seen broken arch or ruined temple finding its way into the background of some sacred subject; and this fact would itself point to some visit to Rome in the early part of his career, even if other conditions of his life and work did not point inevitably to the same conclusion. From the year 1464, when he was 25 years of age, he was employed, together with one Pavolo d'Andrea, a master in that craft, on the *bottini* of Siena, the pipes which supplied from without the city's water supply and filled the beautiful Fonte Gaia of her Piazza; while from the years 1469–70 Francesco was formally employed by the Commune of Siena as *Operaio dei Bottini*, in full charge of her water supply, and from then till 1477, though able to attend to other work in painting,¹ could not leave the city, save for very short periods of absence.

¹ We may note (v. Ch. II) that most of his painting belongs to this very time. To 1471 the *Coronation of the Virgin* on the walls of the Spedale Chapel; to 1475 the *Nativity* for the monastery of S. Benedetto fuori Porta Tufi; probably from 1472–74 the great *Coronation of Madonna* in the Siena Gallery.

Therefore it seems most probable that his first visit (or visits) to Rome were before the year 1469, and very possibly between 1464 and 1469, when he was between the ages of twenty-five and thirty; and that then, like Bramante himself, "alone and deep in thought" (*solitario e cogitativo*) he spent on these visits, priceless to his architectural studies, the money gained in more mechanical and less congenial work, yet needed—as he himself tells us—"to supply the necessities of life" (*alle necessità del vitto supplire*), but which had left the higher cravings of his artistic nature unsatisfied. "Yet all the time being desirous in that art of drawing and architecture, which is a part of the art of design (*parte dell'antigrafica*), to come to perfection, I made the firm resolve to spare myself no fatigue which I saw was necessary to arrive at this end." Then it was—as well as in the later visits which I shall mention—that we may imagine, as Vasari in his *Life of the Master* tells us, that "he went so deep in his researches of the manner of the antique amphitheatres and other similar things that they were the cause of his giving less time to his study of sculpture; but they were not for all that, nor have they ever been, of less honour to him than his sculptures could have been."¹

These records are happily preserved to us in his own drawings which have survived. I have been through these collected drawings carefully myself, in many cases two or three times, and have found them often of great beauty and of absorbing interest; and I do not believe that their antiquarian element will prevent this description from conveying something of the same interest to the reader. With them must be included the notes and drawings belonging certainly to a later period of the Master's life, when he journeyed south in the service of Alfonso II of Aragon, who became King of Naples, and of his successor; drawings which are preserved in the Print Room of the Uffizi Gallery of Florence, and which may date within or about the year 1491—possibly from February to June of that year and in the early autumn of the year following.

Col. Rocchi tells us, in a condensed, but very clear and correct account,² that on several occasions Francesco

¹ Cf. Vasari. *Life of Francesco di Giorgio*.

² Cf. E. Rocchi, *op. cit.*, I, p. 10.

alludes to the monuments of ancient Rome, and sometimes draws from them his own canons of architecture; as, for instance, when in connection with circular temples he refers us to the Pantheon, to the temple of Bacchus (now the church of Santa Costanza in Via Nomentana), and the temple of S. Stefano Rotondo. "The greater part of the drawings by him" (this writer continues), "of the monuments of Rome are brought together in a *codex* in the Biblioteca (formerly) Saluzziana (now Ducale) of Turin, from which it takes its name. There are about eighty drawings therein of basilicas, arches, porticos, stone monuments (*lapidi*), sepulchres, palaces, baths, bridges, theatres and ancient unknown buildings with inscriptions added. The titles and accompanying notes in Siennese dialect (*lingua senese*) reveal the first impressions of the young architect, to whose eyes many of these monuments presented themselves in very much better state of preservation than they are now; and, in fact, from the examination which he made of them, there frequently emerges information of importance, and but little known.

Besides those of the *Codice Saluzziano* other drawings of Roman remains are to be found in the *Cartelle* of the Royal Uffizi Galleries at Florence, identified as the work of Francesco by the worthy Inspector of Antique Art, Nerino Ferri. The above-mentioned *Cartelle* contains besides drawings of antique monuments at Capua, Baiæ, Averno, Pozzuoli, Cuma, Montecassino, Sangermano, visited and drawn by Francesco di Giorgio during the different periods of his stay in Naples."

I have now before me my own notes on this "Codex" (*Codice Saluzzo*) of the Ducal Library at Turin, made during three successive visits to that city. Though I have carefully gone through the other surviving "Codices" at Florence (Uffizi Print Room and Biblioteca Nazionale), and in Siena itself, I do not consider any to equal in interest and beauty of illustration that of the Turin Ducal Library.¹ Let me now take my reader very briefly

¹ Through the kindness of a friend at Turin, the painter, Mario Micheletti, I have been able to arrange with the photographer, C. Dall'Armi, of that city, whose work is of the first order, for a set of photographs from these original drawings in the "Codex," which have been of great value to my own study, and some of which I hope to be able to reproduce among my illustrations.

through this latter, using specially the notes of my last visit. It may be noted that this Ducal Library also contains a complete copy of the "Trattato di Architettura"¹ taken from the *Codice Stroziano* (Magliabecchiana) now in Florence, and copied with its drawings by the architect Carlo Cherici in 1831, which afterwards came into the hands of Carlo Promis, the great authority on Francesco di Giorgio, who published the "Trattato" in November of that year. But far more interesting, more artistic and precious for our study is the original copy of the "Trattato" in this same Ducal Library, in manuscript on parchment, illustrated by the Master's original drawings; and with an exquisite self-portrait, enclosed in the letter P with a winged Love at its side, at the beginning of its first page, showing all that wonderful delicacy and charm to which I have yet to allude in treating later his work as a miniaturist. This beautiful initial letter and others of his drawings here are coloured (a wash of blue, red and gold touches being used); but the greater part, of course, are in pen and ink of the most exquisite finish and detail. As I am devoting a special chapter to the "Trattato" (Treatise on Architecture), I shall not take it in more detail at this point; but will only say that, comparing them with the famous "Codex" of the Magliabecchiana at Florence, I find the drawings of the Turin Ducal Library even finer, following closely the same sequence of subject-matter, and taking first architecture, and later guns and military engines, with last of all the interesting drawings of ancient buildings made in Rome.

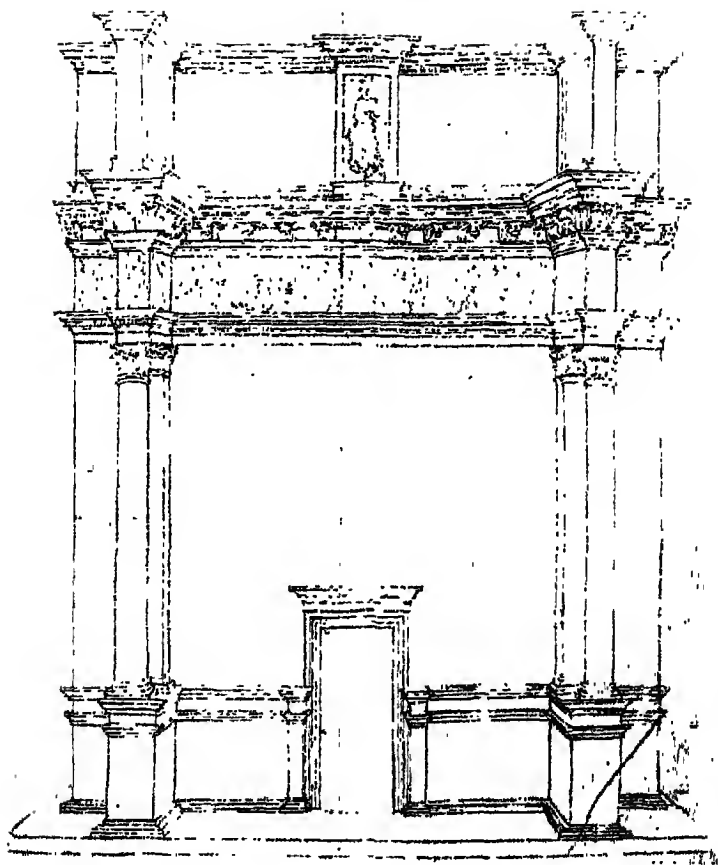
It is to these last that I shall direct my attention here. Among them I found what seemed to me to be the Colosseum; then the façade of the temple of Nerva, with its full inscription (for Francesco, we may observe, has generally the excellent habit of copying exactly inscriptions of buildings), IMP. NERVA. CÆSAR (P)ONTIF. MAX. (etc.). There came next a beautiful drawing of the front of the temple of Antoninus and Faustina, still existing in the Forum Romanum, with its fine columns, which was

¹ The full title of this work is "Trattato di Architettura Civile e Militare, con una collezione di disegni . . . circa l'anno 1480, da Francesco di Giorgio architetto, pittore e scultore Senese." I shall give it my special attention in a later chapter.

probably saved by its conversion into a Christian church; and here, too, the artist adds the inscription DIVO ANTONINO ET. . . . which were added by the Senate, after his death, to the original dedication to Faustina. Next to this I came upon a drawing of extraordinary beauty, which it is my hope to be able to reproduce in this work. This represents a great façade with doorway, Corinthian columns, entablature in sculptured relief, and above this in a niche an upright figure. I find from Francesco's note on this drawing that he admired it as "a most worthy building in Rome—(*edi*) *ficio degnissimo in Ra*), of very grand proportions and adornment (*di grandissimo circumferetio*), and adorned with marvellous sculptures (*honato di mirabile sculture*)"—this admirable relief being probably connected with the draped upright figure mentioned above. Here I ask the kindly reader, by his own knowledge and study, to help me to answer the question—has this glorious building disappeared without a trace, or can it be connected with any existing remains?¹

Francesco di Giorgio was deeply interested in circular buildings and the problems connected with their construction; and made studies both of their interior form (noted by him as *forma . . . di Scta Maria Rotonda*) in the case of the Pantheon, and also, as I think, the exterior of the same building. Mr. Stuart Jones, in his admirable guide to Classical Rome in the series published by my late friend Mr. Grant Allen, points out that "the Pantheon solved the (relatively easy) problem of the cupola supported by a circular drum; the next step was to construct a dome over a rectangular space, and this we find attempted in one of the minor halls of the Baths of Caracalla. . . . The history of the cupola"—he adds—"culminates in a monument which, though Christian in date and purpose, is thoroughly classical in conception and even in decoration. This is the Mausoleum of S. Costanza, where we have a

¹ Since this was written I have been able to visit and study at Rome the now recovered Forum of Nerva with its Temple of Minerva, and to compare this drawing by Francesco with the existing remains, noting specially the columns, architrave and figure of the goddess Minerva, all of which appear in both. I now suggest whether this drawing may not be of this grand Forum, long before its spoliation by the Borghese Pope Paul V for his Janiculan fountain.



*Drawing by
F. di Giorgio*

10 FAÇADE OF TEMPLE.

[DUCAL LIBRARY,
TURIN.]

cupola lighted with windows, carried not on a solid drum, but on twelve couples of columns and buttressed by a circular ambulatory roofed with a barrel vault—an exquisite articulated piece of design.”

Here, again, I have a problem of supreme interest to place before my reader. Francesco has left us in his drawings here a very careful and beautiful design of the interior as well as the ground plan of a circular building, which he distinctly describes in the accompanying note as the “Temple of Bacchus without Rome” (*tempio di Bacco fore di Roma*), while the words following seem to suggest that it was richly adorned with mosaics (*honorissimo di musaiche*), which, in fact, actually appear in the drawings. Beneath the decorated dome is a circle of draped upright figures, in niches at the sides of the lights; and the whole is supported by a circle of columns, grouped two together, seven of which appear in the segment shown in the drawing.¹ Can this interesting drawing refer to the Mausoleum of Constantia (Sa. Costanza) mentioned above? We have seen that Col Rocchi does so refer to it by identifying this Temple di Bacco with the existing church of Sa. Costanza in the Via Nomentana; and in many ways—allowing for alteration in the past five centuries—it does seem to correspond. On the other hand (as the above writer himself points out), Francesco was no archaeological student, but an architect, busied in studying the antique forms, and invariably calls the buildings before him by their popular and accepted names, *e.g.* the Pantheon as S. Maria Rotonda, and again, as we shall see later, the temple of S. Stefano Rotondo; and one is disposed to ask why, in this case of the temple of Bacchus, he should not have called this circular building by its accepted Christian name? If I am so fortunate as to reach Rome again before this goes to press I shall certainly make my way to the Via Nomentana with the photograph of Francesco’s drawing in my hand; in the meantime I must leave this question, with other buildings drawn by his hand (and there are many which I cannot treat

¹ It may be noted here that the ground plan accompanying this drawing and marked “*fondo del tempio di Bacco*,” is very clear and complete.

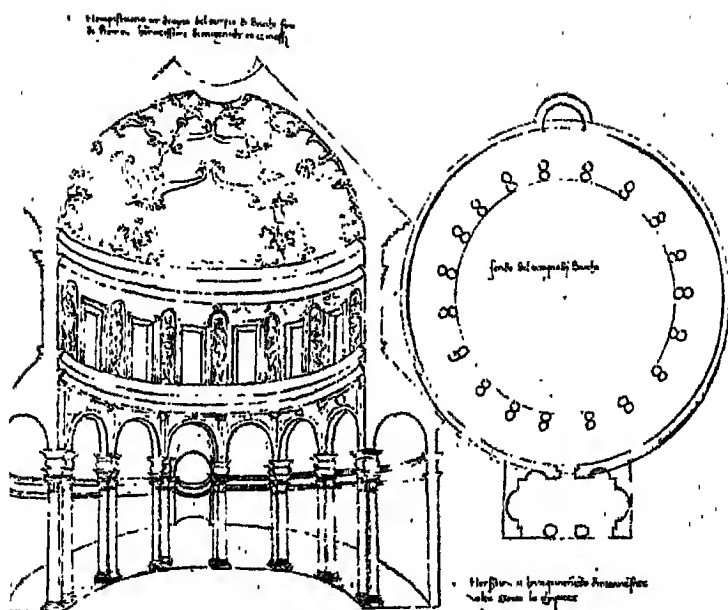
here in detail), before my readers' judgment and consideration.¹

I turn now to a set of drawings of the same character, but which almost certainly belong to the period of the Master's visit to Naples, in the service of the House of Aragon, and which are now preserved in the Print Room of the Uffizi Gallery at Florence. I have no photographs of these, but went over them twice, making careful notes as they well merit our attention. They are included in what is called the *Taccuino del Viaggio* (Notebook of Travel) of Francesco di Giorgio; and here Signor A. Bartoli's notes in his "Ancient Monuments of Rome" may be of help to our study.² The writer here places Francesco's earlier visits to Rome, according to Promis ("Life of Francesco di Giorgio"), between 1450 and 1467, but adds "that in his journeys from Siena to Naples in 1491, 1492 (v. Promis, *op. cit.*, ch. VI), and 1494 (Milanesi Note on Vasari III, 85, 86), he certainly stayed at Rome and studied her monuments. That fact is clear to us from examination of the twenty sheets (*fogli*) of the Uffizi, certainly the drawings numbered 318-337." The writer then proceeds to classify these sheets into two groups, one dealing with the monuments of Chiusi, Perugia, Spoleto, Terni and others of unknown locality; and the other with those of Rome and her vicinity, of San Germano, Cassino, Capua, Naples, Pozzuoli, Baiæ and Cumæ, adding that "there is no doubt that this second group can be referred to his journeys from Siena to Naples, of which journeys he shows us in some part the itinerary and the stopping places."

¹ Vasari in his "Introduction of Architecture" (Lives I, 108) mentions this "temple of Bacchus outside Rome at Sant' Agnese, which they say is the burying-place of Santa Costanza, daughter of Constantine Emperor, where are many children with vine leaves and grapes"; and again (I, 144) that the ancients "made use of mosaics (*vetri*) to adorn their temples, as we see to-day at Rome in the temple of Bacchus."

But I have now been able, on returning to Rome, to study carefully this most interesting church of S. Costanza, near S. Agnese, and have no doubt in my mind that Francesco's drawing refers to this building—the reference to Bacchus coming naturally from the genii in the vaulting gathering grapes.

² Cf. A. Bartoli, "I Monumenti Antichi di Roma nei Disegni degli Uffizi in Firenze," Vol. II, p. 7.



*Drawing by
 F. di Giorgio*

II TEMPLE OF BACCHUS.

[DUCAL LIBRARY,
 TURIN.

In his great work on the monuments of Rome, I found, however, that Bartoli had described only seven sheets of drawings—being those, as he says, which refer especially to Rome—and these by no means the most interesting out of the whole set of twenty sheets. Those reproduced by him he considers as referring to the *Frigidarium* and *Palaestra* of the Baths of Caracalla and to the *Septizonium* (the inscription here *Septizonium Vetus* seems by a later hand). Then follows a pen-and-ink drawing of columns and an architrave, in which the inscription (*Epaphrodito Aug.*, etc.) has been carefully copied, a ground plan of the Temple of Romulus in Via Appia (marked *presso a San Bastiano*) and a measured ground plan of the Temple of Romulus and the Sacra Urbs, which became included in the church of S.S. Cosimo and Damiano and which Francesco has noted under the names of those saints.

Here, of course, we are in the Forum Romanum; and the next drawing brings us to the Basilica of Constantine with a measured ground plan marked (*Tem(pl) u(m) Pacis*, which was within the Forum of Peace. Mr. Stuart Jones tells us¹ that in A.D. 71 “Vespasian built a Temple of Peace to celebrate the conclusion of the Jewish war, and the enclosed piazza in which the temple stood came to be known as the Temple of Peace. It lay to the N.E. of the Forum Romanum, and all that can be seen of it is the small space which has been cleared at the back of SS. Cosimo and Damiano. The Temple and Forum of Peace became a veritable museum of works of art, both statuary and painting, taken from Nero’s Golden House, and given by Vespasian to be enjoyed by the people of Rome. . . . This Forum of Peace”—he adds, writing in 1910—“has not yet been excavated, except for the narrow strip just described.”

We must again remember here that Francesco was not an archæologist but an architect, and—as we shall find later—was to become one of the best of his time; and that he made these drawings to help his study in the reconstruction of the rules and beautiful forms of ancient architecture. He was especially interested, as we see here,

¹ Cf. Stuart Jones, “Classical Rome” (Grant Allen’s Historical Guides), ch. VIII.

in the ground plans of these buildings; and I am going to suggest that these ground plans might be of the very greatest value and interest in present archæological reconstruction. This would apply to his measured plan of the Temple of Peace;¹ and yet again to his ground plan of S. Stefano Rotondo, giving also part of the external elevation with columns, architrave and other details. This early Christian church had been constructed by Pope Simplicius (468-82), but was held to have been built on the foundations of the central building of a great market of the time of Nero. Having fallen into decay it was restored by Nicholas V (1447-53), who altered the old and beautiful design of its concentric rings of columns by destroying one circle, and filling in the spaces between the two others. This must have taken place very near Francesco's time, and have attracted his attention—perhaps even his regret. He has left us also here a beautiful pen-and-ink drawing of the antique *sedile*, still existing in this church, as well as of another ancient seat; of a palace which, according to the inscription, seems to belong to the Palatine; and a sketch plan of the Circus of Maxentius and of an old tomb on the Via Appia, whose inscription he has carefully copied.²

The other drawings in this "notebook of travel" (*Taccuino*) take us away from Rome to central and southern Italy—to Capua, San Germano, Naples, Narni, Terni, Spoleto, Perugia, Chiusi. They include ground plans, façades of temples and their decoration, details of classic architecture and occasional figures—such as that of Christ Crucified, of a naked boy (marked *Amor*) and a draped figure playing a lyre. Francesco was a very great and finished draughtsman, and his treatment of the figure is no less beautiful than his architecture; and, whenever possible, he copies the antique inscriptions carefully word

¹ The reader will find the position of the Forum of Vespasian, with the Temple of Peace in its centre, indicated in Baedeker's excellent plan of the Fora Caesarum, and yet more clearly (p. 139) in Sir Banister Fletcher's "History of Architecture." It will be seen that it lay behind the Temple of Antonius and Faustina and that of Romulus, and between the Forum of Nerva and the Basilica of Constantine.

² I have compared all the reprints given by Sig. Bartoli, and verified them with the originals in the Uffizi *Taccuino*.

for word. In my own notebook I find these words, which I venture to commend to my reader's attention—"there is a mass of information in these drawings for anyone who could work them out carefully in connection with classic buildings and their still existing remains." In so doing they might even be compared usefully with the yet more detailed sketch plans of that great painter and architect Baldassare Peruzzi—who had probably learnt much from Francesco himself—, of Simone del Pollaiuolo called La Cronaca, of Bramante and of Giuliano da San Gallo.

Simone del Pollaiuolo got his nickname of La Cronaca from his stories of the wonders of Rome, where, says Vasari "escaping from Florence from certain annoying matters, he found his kinsman, Antonio del Pollaiuolo, and at once commenced to study the most beautiful antiques and went about measuring them with great delight. Having returned to Florence, being able to talk well, he used to recount the marvels of Rome and other places with such accuracy that he was henceforth named *Il Cronaca*, for he really seemed a chronicle to those who heard him talk." But Vasari goes on to add that he was held among the moderns as the most excellent architect of Florence; and that we can tell from his works that he was a good imitator of the antique, of the rules of Vitruvius and the works of Filippo di Ser Brunellesco.¹ Simone's drawings I found far more detailed than those of Francesco di Giorgio; but, like the latter, he was evidently attracted by the circular buildings of antiquity, as we see from his drawings of the Pantheon and S. Stefano Rotondo.

Bramante, as architect, may stand on a yet higher level, but was no less inspired by this message of these mighty ruins of antique Rome. Born at Urbino, in 1444, he found his way in 1499 to the Eternal City and—as Vasari tells us—having come thither from Lombardy, with sufficient money in hand "to be able to measure at his ease all the ancient buildings in Rome, setting to work he

¹ Simone's life (b. 1457, d. 1508) is given by Vasari in detail, though the statement of his relationship to Antonio has no foundation (v. Vasari, Vol. IV, p. 442; Note by Milanese). His visit to Rome is put by Milanese as about 1493. Several of his drawings are reproduced by Bartoli in the work above mentioned.

went about, solitary and full of thought (*solitario e cogitativo*), and in no great space of time had measured as many such buildings as there were in the city and in the country without . . . and measured what there was at Tivoli and the Villa Adriana."¹ When Bramante died at Rome in 1514, leaving his great creation of St. Peter's—in which he used to the full the knowledge given by these earlier studies, and of which Vasari tells us, "the conception of Bramante appeared measureless in this work and he gave it a very great beginning, so that neither San Gallo or Buonarroti could add to it"—yet unfinished, it was Fra Giocondo, with Raphael of Urbino and Giuliano di San Gallo, who took charge of the work on the Basilica. Fra Giocondo was born at Verona, and went to Rome between 1478-84 and again in 1497-99; and he died there in 1513. His drawings of ancient buildings are numerous and valuable, including studies of cornices, bases of Doric capitals and buildings on the Palatine, and of the Temple of Venus in the Forum of Rome; and not less important are those of the Florentine Giuliano di San Gallo and his brother Antonio. Giuliano was in Rome under the Borgia, and in 1504, after the election of Pope Julius II, was in close relations there with Bramante, Raphael and Baldassare Peruzzi,² whose drawings must also not be overlooked; and Vasari tells us when the two architects, Antonio and Giuliano, returned to Florence "they brought into their house there an infinitude of the fairest antique things in marble, which adorned, and still adorn, Florence, not less than they themselves had adorned its art."

I have already made the suggestion here that the researches of these men—preserved to us in their priceless drawings of antique buildings, many of which must now have disappeared—are a mine of wealth which have

¹ Vasari, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 154. Bartoli gives among his reproductions the beautiful pen-and-ink drawings of the Baths of Diocletian, details of the Foro Traiano, and of the great arches of the Basilica of Constantine.

² Peruzzi is of special interest to us here from his connection (v, Pt. II) with Francesco di Giorgio. Born at Siena (1481) he came to Rome in 1536, and has left us many beautiful pen-and-wash drawings—to be noted specially those of the Arch of Titus and Mausoleum of Augustus (cornice)—nearly one hundred in all. Note also Raphael's drawing of interior of the Pantheon.

furea immorto inel quale lei inuita sibile
 labalio affettato ensonpostr inu pironibale
 nestro dteir piena alla spoltura lapeto epose
 lu a smita dicio ofellei piu longo tempo alser
 una stessè charuna sopra posto teghola rhoue
 equeto ciefo antipio e d'um posto sopra allavabi
 rie duncela chiamata lachanto in questo mico
 spesso l'ordinie plo sopra posto pest le foglie in
 aramustelli sirbando l'alacofe dalla manto dagli
 mngelie peso della teghola rhoueistetti piechamici



Drawing by
 F. di Giorgio

scarcely yet been fully recognized or explored.¹ We think here of those wonders of the art of Greece from Nero's Golden House, which may be still beneath the ruins of that Forum of Peace whose temple Martini had seen and studied; and we may remember that all these men had been working before the terrible sack of Rome (1527), when so much which had belonged to her beautiful past went under, as well as before the ravages of later Popes, of whom it was said bitterly that what the barbarians had spared the Barberini ended.

But for these workers themselves their drawings and ground plans were, above all else, the scaffolding, the starting point of the creation of a new architecture—that of Brunelleschi, of Bramante, of Leo Battista Alberti, of Laurana, of Francesco di Giorgio; which, in its fresh emotion, its purity of line, its harmony of proportion, its rhythmic grace is—to my judgment at least—unequalled in the world. It is the expression, in architectural forms, of the vivifying consciousness of a new world of life—of all the best that is included in the word Renaissance; and there is a subject by Francesco in that wonderful book of his drawings in Turin which brought this thought fully home to me. He is treating here, in connection with the orders of Greek architecture, that inspiring idea which we shall come to later in his “Trattato,” and which belongs to his own time—that all the beauty of architectural design must flow out of the human figure (whether of man, woman or young girl), must be based upon the proportion and harmony of its parts; and suddenly there has come into his thoughts the old story of the sculptor (was it Pygmalion, or, as written here in his own hand, Callimachus?) and of his ivory image, turned by Venus to a living maid. But in the lovely drawing—which I reproduce here—it is surely the Master himself who starts back, astonished, before the naked form of the young girl, yet half concealed within the column with its acanthus leaves before him, half emergent into warm breathing life. She

¹ In saying this, however, I am aware that one of the greatest authorities of recent times on Roman archæology, Professor Lanciani, had used the plans of the “Capitolium” of Francesco di Giorgio, in the Saluzzo codex, to aid his study on the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus (v, Rocchi, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 12).

is something to him (and this is no fancy of mine, but must surely have been in his own thought) very real, very wonderful—the dream of this young, fresh life assuming bodily shape before his eyes; for, out of those long hours of study among the ancient treasures of the past, even thus suddenly may have come to him the new thought, the new message, the vision of a new beauty of form revealed to his own spirit and through him to us, and which was henceforth to claim his life.

In this work—and especially in this chapter—I have frequently had to turn to the reader for his helpful sympathy, to offer some suggestion which it is for his knowledge and study to develop and work out: for in treating of this marvellous creative spirit, this complex and multiform being, one would have to be archæologist, architect and engineer, as well as painter and sculptor, to follow him in every fresh expression of his powers. But there is one branch of his studies which needs no specialized knowledge to approach and appreciate. Francesco di Giorgio Martini is, from first to last, an accomplished and most attractive painter of miniature. He seems to find scope in this delightful branch of art for all his refinement of drawing, his knowledge of the figure and architecture, and the sense of decorative beauty which had come to him as part of the old tradition of the art of Siena. We find this even in his panels of the story of S. Benedict in the Uffizi Gallery, which is almost like a miniature in its delicate beauty of detail; and what else are his *Biccherno* and *Gabelle*—which we shall come to later—but exquisite pictorial chronicles, in miniature, of the story of old Siena? Senator Venturi is full of enthusiasm for the Chantilly miniature (Musée Condé) of the “Arts of the Trivio and Quadrivio,”¹ which had been claimed for Botticelli or his school—and mentions a miniature by Martini’s hand at Madrid which I have not seen. I have spoken in this chapter of the interesting self-portrait which commences his “Codex” in the Ducal Library of Turin; and I shall come later to the wonderful miniatures of the Convent of the Osservanza of Siena, illustrating the “Treatise on Animals,” by Aristotle, with a commentary by Albertus Magnus, and showing at the side

¹ Cf. A. Venturi, “Studi del Vero,” p. 96. See also my list of paintings; and description later in Part II of this work.



Miniature by
F. di Giorgio

13 CODEX OF
ALBERTUS MAGNUS.

[CONVENT OF THE
OSSERVANZA,
SIENA.

of the manuscript text the *Labours of Hercules* (dated 1463-4); or again, in another book here, the "Summa Teologica" (1463), Faith, a lovely nude figure with clasped hands and wind-tossed hair, standing on a rock amid troubled waters, looking upwards to the sun.

But there is one miniature of especial interest, within the Vatican Library, which connects itself at this point very directly with our subject. At an open window two figures are standing, of which the older man, with cap on head and a richly-bound book in his hands, looks down on the younger, straight into his eyes, as master might on pupil or older to a younger friend; the expression in his face one of kindly intent, sympathy, encouragement—that of his younger companion grateful appreciation and reverence, as if absorbed and dominated by the other's communicated thought. There is no doubt whatever of the portraits here. In the profile with the lofty brow and hooked nose (broken from a hurt in tilting) we see the well-known features of Federigo of Montefeltro, the great Duke of Urbino—features which Piero della Francesca has preserved for us, also in profile, in his panel of the Uffizi; and in the younger man I find—from his self-portrait in the initial letter of the "Codex," as well as from the drawing just mentioned—the figure of no other than Francesco di Giorgio himself. It is the great Duke of Urbino, his master and friend, to whom he was to dedicate his life work in literature, the "Treatise of Architecture," who is beside him in this beautiful miniature, which exactly expresses their mutual relations—kindly, sympathetic and appreciative patronage; and devoted, admiring—almost adoring—service. And the moment has come which is to bring this new figure of the great Duke, as friend and patron, into the young artist's life; and in so doing, to fulfil his dreams, to give complete expression to his studies, to lift him from the narrower life of the *bottega* and its commissions within old Siena into that wider world of culture that we now call Renaissance; and which had, at this moment of Italian story, found its very focus of living flame, its springtime of glad blossoming within this famous Court of Urbino.

CHAPTER IV

THE COURT OF URBINO

FEDERIGO DI MONTEFELTRO, Count of Montefeltro and Durante, Lord of Gubbio and Duke of Urbino, is one of the greatest figures of his time in Italian history. A friend and teacher of my Cambridge days—the late Oscar Browning—has left us a work on “The Age of the Condottieri.” The title itself inspires, rings out with something of a trumpet call; but in that age of mercenary warfare no figure is more inspiring than that of the great Lord of Urbino, who placed this art of war on a higher and more chivalrous level, and made his own little Court a model of manners and culture to all Europe.

The Humanist Poggio Bracciolini wrote of him that “besides his rare eloquence, his many personal and mental endowments, in military skill he was surpassed by no Captain of his time”; and Vespasiano da Bisticci, who had long resided at his Court, tells us that “in Messer Federigo were united many virtues. In military science, which was his profession, uniting energy with consummate judgment, he conquered by prudence as much as by force; and in none of his many battles was he ever worsted . . . His modesty equalled his merit . . . nor may I omit, among his remarkable excellences, the strict observance of good faith, wherein he never failed.”¹

Though a military leader, a Condottiere by profession, Federigo, throughout his long and brilliant career, was devoted to the interests of his own principality of Urbino; and at the same time shared to the fullest extent in the Humanistic culture of his age. He spent within his little State the large salaries which he gained as Captain-General of the armies of Naples or of the States of the church;²

¹ Cf. James Dennistoun of Dennistoun, “Memoirs of the Dukes of Urbino,” vol. I, ch. XII, London, 1851.

² His war pay from Alfonso of Naples exceeded 8,000 ducats a month, and from this Prince and his son he had a peace pension of 6,000. In his later life, as Captain-General of the Italian League, he drew in war no less than 165,000 ducats annually, 45,000 going to his own share, his peace allowance being in all 65,000. Of these vast sums the larger portion must have gone to his own Duchy. V. Dennistoun, *op. cit.*

he made his own Court most renowned in Europe in the arts of peace and war; in all his busy life of camps this Duke found time for culture of the classics, and the great library which he formed at Urbino was the most famous of his time, and, for its collection of priceless manuscripts, unique in the world.

Vespasiano has given us some interesting details of its formation. "During more than fourteen years the Duke kept thirty or forty copyists continually employed in transcribing Greek or Latin manuscripts. Not only the classics, in both languages, but the ecclesiastical and mediæval authors, Italian poets and the works of contemporary Humanists found a place in his collection. The cost of the whole was estimated at considerably over 30,000 ducats. Each volume was bound in crimson with silver clasps; the leaves were vellum, exquisitely adorned with miniatures; nor could you find a printed book in the whole library, for the Duke would have been ashamed to own one."¹

Symonds notes here that Vespasiano's admiration and love for these delicately finished MSS. (in whose adornment Francesco di Giorgio may himself have aided) are highly characteristic; and goes on to describe a painting—attributed to Melozzo—in the Royal collection at Windsor, which brings the life of this Court most vividly before us. In a great hall, lighted from a dome above, Duke Federigo is seated, wearing his robe and badges of the Garter, which he had received from King Henry VII of England; his left hand rests upon a folio, and his little son Guidobaldo—who appears also, kneeling beside him, in Francesco's bronze relief in the Carmine at Venice—is standing, a boyish figure, at his knee. Behind are courtiers, ecclesiastics and servants, and the whole company are

¹ Cf. J. A. Symonds, "Renaissance in Italy, Revival of Learning," ch. V. This writer adds elsewhere ("Age of the Despots"), ch. III, "Vespasiano's life of Duke Federigo (*Vite di Uomini Illustri*) is one of the most charming literary portraits extant. It has, moreover, all the value of a personal memoir, for Vespasiano had lived in close relation with the Duke as his librarian." I may refer the reader also to the translation of the Vespasiano Memoirs into English by W. G. and Emily Waters, 1926, which include "The Commentary on the sayings and doings of the most invincible Federigo, Duke of Urbino" (1422-1482).

listening to a grey-haired, black-robed Humanist who reads to them from a large book, bound in crimson with silver clasps, on the desk before him.

The whole scene finds a pen picture in the pages of Vespasiano. "The Duke"—he tells us—"was a ready Latin scholar, and extremely fond of ancient history. The principal works of S. Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus were habitually read to him. He was well acquainted with the Bible as well as the Commentaries of SS. Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine and Gregory. Among the classic authors whom he was in the habit of reading or listening to were Livy, Sallust, Quintus Curtius, Cæsar, Plutarch, Tacitus, Suetonius and Eusebius. When at table he listened to the Latin historians, chiefly Livy, except in Lent, when some religious book was read; anyone being free to enter the hall and speak with him then." To these pictures of life in the Palace of Urbino, I would add another scene from without. It is in the Campagna of Rome, and the morning sunlight glitters on the rich dresses and armour as an armed cavalcade rides out to escort "that great Humanistic Pope, Pius II (Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini), carried in his litter across this Roman Campagna to Tibur and Tusculum; and forgetting for a while his gout as he discussed with the famous Condottiere, Federigo di Montefeltro Duke of Urbino, on the military system of the ancients and the wars of Troy."¹

It was this great figure of Renaissance story, at once prince, soldier, scholar and statesman, who, in the year 1477, had summoned Francesco di Giorgio Martini to his Court at Urbino; and this visit was, without doubt, the turning-point in the young Siennese artist's career. It was somewhat before this time—at least ten years, or even more—that the Duke had decided on building at Urbino a palace worthy of himself and his Court. That palace was to be the wonderful building which still exists, dominating the whole plain beneath, with in the distance a line of surging mountains from which emerges, on the left, Monte Catria, then Monte Nerone, far away the Sassi di Simeone and northward Monte Carpegna, cradle

¹ V. Selwyn Brinton, "The Golden Age of the Medici," ch. II, p. 24.

of the Montefeltro race; and which has been described, as he knew it at the time, by Baldassare Castiglione in the opening pages of his "*Cortegiano*."¹

"The little city of Urbino"—he there tells us—"on the slopes of the Apennines and set (as we all know) in the middle of Italy—looking towards the Adriatic sea, placed among mountains but with a favourable climate, with a country around most fertile and full of fruits, and, besides pure air, supplied abundantly for all the needs of human life—has been happiest of all in her princes, above all in that glorious memory of Duke Federigo, who was in his days the very light of Italy; nor is there wanting the true and ample witness of those still living to his prudence, humanity and justice, to his unconquered spirit and his military discipline. This prince, among his other laudable acts, had built upon the rugged heights of Urbino a palace which, according to the opinion of many, is the most beautiful to be found in Italy, and so furnished with every convenience that it seems to be not so much a palace as a palatial city. He furnished it with not only the usual plenishings of silver plate, of chamber hangings in the richest brocades of gold, silk and the like; but for its further adornment added an infinitude of antique statues of marble and bronze, of the rarest paintings, of instruments of music of every kind; nor was there anything there which was not most rare and excellent. Next to this, at the greatest expense, he brought together a great number of the most excellent and rarest books in Greek, Latin and Hebrew, which he all adorned with gold and silver, as thinking this to be the supreme excellency of his mighty palace."

This fair palace, which—even after the ruins of time, after being looted by the Borgia Duke Valentino, and stripped bare by its later Papal possessors of all its treasures of art and learning—still climbs to the skies with its towers, loggia, and airy terraces; this wonderful achievement of the Renaissance spirit, a creation unsurpassed in its time,

¹ V. *Il Libro del Cortegiano*, del Conte Baldassar Castiglione, Libro Primo. My own copy—a priceless find at Mantua, in the beautiful Italic type of the time—was published by the heirs of Filippo Giunta at Florence in October of 1528, the year preceding its author's lamented death.

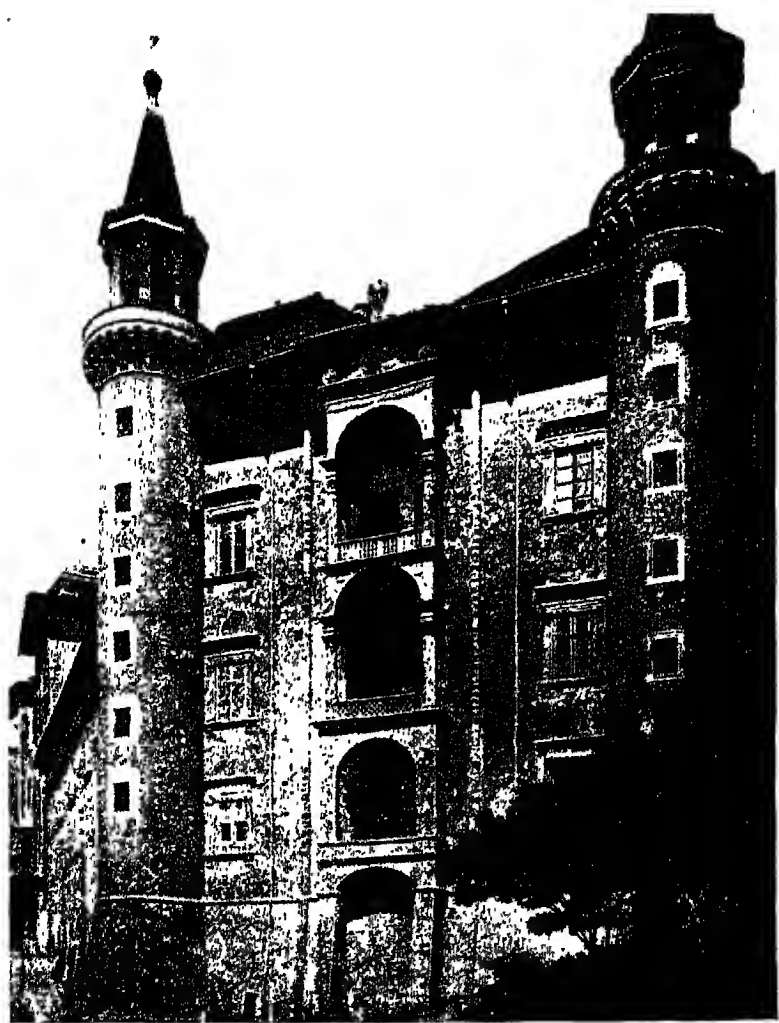
is ascribed by Vasari, unhesitatingly and in the clearest terms, to the genius and direct design of Francesco di Giorgio. "In architecture"—we read in his lives of this Master and Vecchietta—"he (Francesco) had a very great judgment, and showed that he thoroughly understood that profession; an ample proof of this is to be found in the palace which he made in Urbino for Duke Federigo di Feltro; whose apartments are made with fair and commodious planning; nor less so the most original design of the stairs (*stravaganza delle scale*) which are well planned and attractive beyond any that had been made up to his time.¹ The reception-rooms (*sale*) are grand and magnificent; and the suites of rooms useful and exceptionally rich in their ornament; and, to say all in a few words, all that palace is so fair and so well constructed that no other up to this present time has ever been made to better it."²

There can be no doubt that this attribution—however assured and positive in its statement—can no longer be held. The Palace of Urbino was commenced long before Francesco's visit; and Milanesi even places this, in his note on the above passage, "in 1447, when our Francesco was but eight or nine years old." "It is, moreover, clear"—he continues—"that Duke Federigo, in building it, made use of the design and counsel of Master Luciano di Martino from Laurana in Dalmatia, who died in 1482, to whom we may fairly conjecture that Baccio Pontelli succeeded, who was already from 1480 with that Duke." We have, in fact, the letters patent given by Count Federigo at Pavia to Luciano on June 10th, 1468, in which he states that "we, having resolved to erect in the city of Urbino a fair residence in all respects befitting the rank and reputation of our predecessors and ourselves have . . . selected the same Messer Luciano as engineer and chief of all those employed on that fabric in building, hewing, wood-work, etc."; and goes on to place the workmen and necessary funds under his entire control.³

¹ Dennistoun (*op. cit.*, vol. I) notes that each of the towers contains a special staircase; but this passage may refer to the great staircase leading to the first floor.

² Vasari, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 69-70. Ed. Sansoni. 1878.

³ Translated by Dennistoun (*op. cit.*) from the Latin text by Fungilione, vol. I, p. 147.



14 DUCAL PALACE OF URBINO.

[AT URBINO

We may therefore justly conclude the original design to be by Laurana; but later, in 1481, when Lorenzo de' Medici had asked Duke Federigo for a design or plan of his famous palace, Baccio Pontelli was able to supply it from measurements, stating at the same time that he had no access to the original plan, and that the building was then at the fifth story.

On the strength of these documents such important writers of the last century as Promis, as Dennistoun and Milanesi were disposed to refer the work of our Francesco at Urbino, and even elsewhere, mainly to one direction—that of his duties of military engineer to Duke Federigo. On the other hand, modern criticism has brought forward far more fully his great claims as a civil architect. Rocchi writes very justly that, “the front place taken by Francesco di Giorgio in military architecture has done harm to his fame as a civil architect, which was put into the shade by the very writers who had most contributed to make his memory illustrious”; while Senator Adolfo Venturi, who has done so much in recent years to bring forward the creative work of the Sienese Master, is even more explicit in his utterance. “The writers following later upon Vasari”—he alludes here especially to Milanesi in the note above quoted, and to Promis in his preface to the “Trattato”—“denied to the military engineer of Federigo any importance in the creation of the Ducal Palace, reducing his share therein to the design of a frieze carried out by Ambrogio Barocci on the pedestal of the façade. But the successor of Luciano Laurana, arriving at Urbino but little after the departure of the Dalmatian, the designer of one hundred and thirty-six buildings on which he was constantly working at the Duke's charge, has left a certain and deep trace on the Palace of the Montefeltri, even if his designs were evidently translated by interpreters—not always faithful, and sometimes abandoned to themselves—working on motives which we know as his own. When Laurana had gone, with his purity of design, the naked beauty of his immaculate surfaces, then the decorative pomp, very probably dreamed of by the Duke of Urbino, as by the Malatesta at Rimini, as a sign of his own power, his own splendour, found an opening in the rich adornment of doors and windows, of lintels and capitals of columns,

becoming ever more crowded, more splendid, and abandoned gradually to the inventive fancies of other sculptors—among them the Lombard Ambrogio Barocci and the Florentine Domenico Rosselli. . . . Machines and implements of war carved on the marbles of the pedestal without, and now in the interior of the Palace, exalt in this prince the Condottiere, whom Francesco di Giorgio in a passionate *elogium* proclaims as ‘unconquered’ (*invitto*); the devices of Federigo become designed on the beams of the doors, and interwoven on the golden thread of the friezes along the halls of the palace; and the magnificence of adornment, the pride of rich furnishing succeeds to the abstract beauty of the architectural forms of Laurana, naked, geometric and serene.”¹

What, then, was our Master’s personal share in this wonderful Palace of the Renaissance? What his place between that superbly structural severity of its great creator and the riot of rich forms with which it became filled by its later decorators—the splendid marble doors and carved chimneys, with their rout of dancing babies, in the Sala degli Angeli? It was with this question in my mind that I arrived at Urbino, after a wonderful drive over the dizzy heights of Apennines from Borgo San Sepolcro; and found there the great Palace with her haughty message carved in great Roman letters round the *Cortile*: FEDERICUS.URBINI.DUX.MONTIS-FERETI.AC.DURANTIS.COMES.SANCTÆ.RO.ECCLESIAE.GONFALONERIUS.ATQUE.ITALICI.CONFEDERATIONIS.IMPERATOR.HANC.DOMUM...GLORIAE.ET.POSTERITATI.SUAE.EXÆDIFICAVIT—as if waiting to receive me.²

In my college days, before I had ever visited Italy, my imagination had been fascinated by a romance, which

¹ Cf. Adolfo Venturi, “Storia del Arte Italiana, v. III, L’Architettura del Quattrocento,” ch. IX.

² “Federigo, Duke of Urbino, Count of Montefeltro and Durante, Gonfaloniere of the Roman Church and Commander of the Italian Confederation, built this house from its foundations for his own glory and that of his successors. Victor in many a battle,” it continues, “six times he took the standards of his foes, eight times he drove them from the field. His justice, clemency, liberality and religion equalled in peace and adorned his victories in war.”



15 MARBLE FIGURE OF
DUKE FEDRIGO DI MONTEFELTRO.

[PALACE OF
URBINO.

surely touched upon this wonderful palace at the very time when its glories were for ever to pass away. John Inglesant, sent by the Pope of his time to Urbino, on a secret mission to claim the succession from the last of her Dukes, here described the glories of the palace and their effect upon a mind trained in the Puritan north. "The highest efforts of the genius of the Renaissance had been expended upon this magnificent house. The birth of a new instinct, differing in some respects from any instincts of art which preceded it, had produced original and wonderful results. This new instinct of art abandoned itself without reserve to the pursuit of everything which mankind had ever beheld of the beautiful, had felt of the pathetic, or dreamed of the noble and ideal. The genius of the Renaissance set itself to reproduce this enchanted world of form and colour, traversed by thoughts and spiritual existences mysterious and beautiful . . . by grotesque and humorous delineation, by fanciful representation of human passion under strange and unexpected form, by the dumb ass speaking and grasshoppers playing upon flutes. . . . The bizarre effect was burning itself into his brain. From the overhanging chimneypieces figures and antique masks, such as he had never seen even in dreams, leered out upon him from arabesque leaves of foliage or skulked behind trophies of war, of music, or of the arts of peace. The doors and window frames seemed bowers of fruit and flowers, and forests of carved leaves wreathed the pilasters and walls. But this was not all; with a perfection of design and an extraordinary power of fancy, this world of sylvan imagery was peopled by figures of exquisite grace and sweetness . . . men and women; lovers and warriors in conflicts, dances and festivals; children sporting among flowers. . . . Again, birds of everyplumage confronted—so the grotesque genius willed—fish and sea monsters and shell and marine wonders of every kind. Passing through this long succession of rooms was reached at last the library, a noble apartment of great size furnished with books in antique binding of gold and white vellum, while upon reading-desks were open manuscripts and printed books richly illuminated."¹

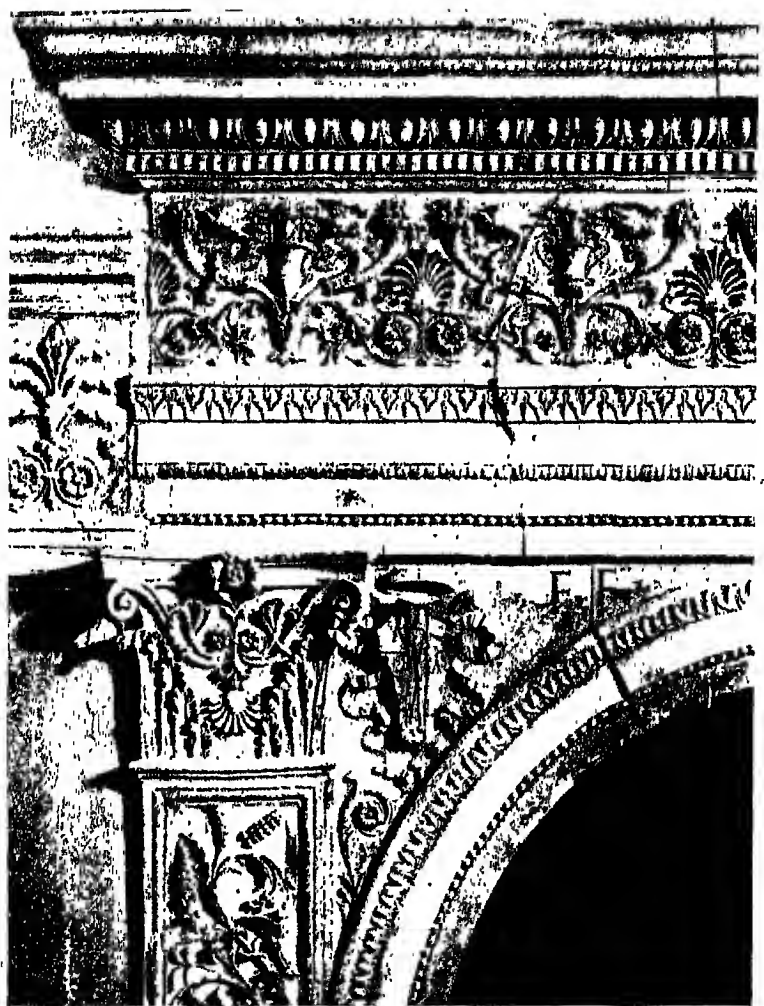
¹ V. "John Inglesant, A Romance," by J. H. Shorthouse, vol. II, ch. VII.

The vision here imagined of a Palace of Renaissance art—such as the Villa Madama at Rome or the Palace at Mantua—might have been almost realized in Umbria before this Palace of its Dukes had been ruthlessly despoiled by their Papal successors. What could be carried off, in the way of pictures, sculpture, rich hangings, manuscripts, printed books was then transported to Rome. There were left only ceilings, doors, wood panelling—and the building itself; but even this still conveys to us something of its ancient glory. When we enter within the palace we come at once upon seventy-two reliefs in stone, undoubtedly from the design of Francesco di Giorgio, which were moved here in 1766 from the outside of the palace, where they had formed the backs of the seats running round its front.¹

These reliefs, described wrongly by Vasari as paintings by our Master ("Francesco di Giorgio was a very great engineer, most of all in machines of war; as he showed in a frieze painted by his hand in the aforesaid Palace of Urbino, which is quite full of similar things of rarity belonging to war") show us instruments of war by land and sea and hydraulic appliances of every kind, some panels being in a much better state of preservation than others. I found there cannon, then just coming to use in war—"bombarde" with their clumsy carriages, and the lighter "colubrine"—a castle being stormed with ladders and a moving tower advancing to the attack, a fine panel of an armed galley with Roman armour, shields and helmets, hydraulic machines and a superb hippogriff; and through all this the device of curling ribbon joining the eagle of the Montefeltro and the oak tree of the Rovere.

Francesco di Giorgio was, above all else, military engineer to Duke Federico, the most famous Condottiere of his age; and this scheme of decoration of the front of his Palace was thus perfectly natural and appropriate.

¹ When they were removed by the Cardinal Legate Stoppani and placed in the upper corridor Monsignor Bianchini published an illustrated account, in both Latin and Italian, in which he described them as the work of Roberto Valturio, a contemporary of Francesco. "But Promis proves that only the thirteenth figure is by Valturio; that five are common to him and Francesco; and that, in sum, the other sixty-six are certainly by this latter." V. Milanese, note on Vasari's life of Francesco di Giorgio Martini.



16 DOOR LEADING TO SALA DEL TRONO.

[PALACE OF
URBINO.

Most of these panels are, in fact, translations into stone relief of the drawings by Francesco himself, preserved in the libraries of Siena, Florence and Turin—and were of special interest to me when I saw them, coming to them directly from my study of the “Trattato” in the Siena library. But for this very reason I shall not treat them in more detail here, but reserve this subject for its proper place in a later chapter. I wish, however, to refer to one panel which is of exceptional interest. Francesco, who—as we shall see later—was perhaps (Leonardo alone excepted) the greatest engineer and mechanic of his time, had undoubtedly, in that fertile mind of his, already some conception of a very modern implement of war. The tank, as used in the Great War, is certainly foreshadowed here in the war chariot with guns placed in tiers—probably the lighter “colubrine”—as if advancing to attack. I have a drawing, made by myself from the panel at Urbino, now before me, showing this conception, which we shall find again treated with yet more detail and definition, among the drawings of the precious “Codex” by his own hand in the Magliabecchiana library at Florence. I may add here that these panels, from Francesco’s own designs, were carried out in stone by Ambrogio Barocci, of Milan, who has other work—doors, windows and marble chimneys—in the apartments of the palace.

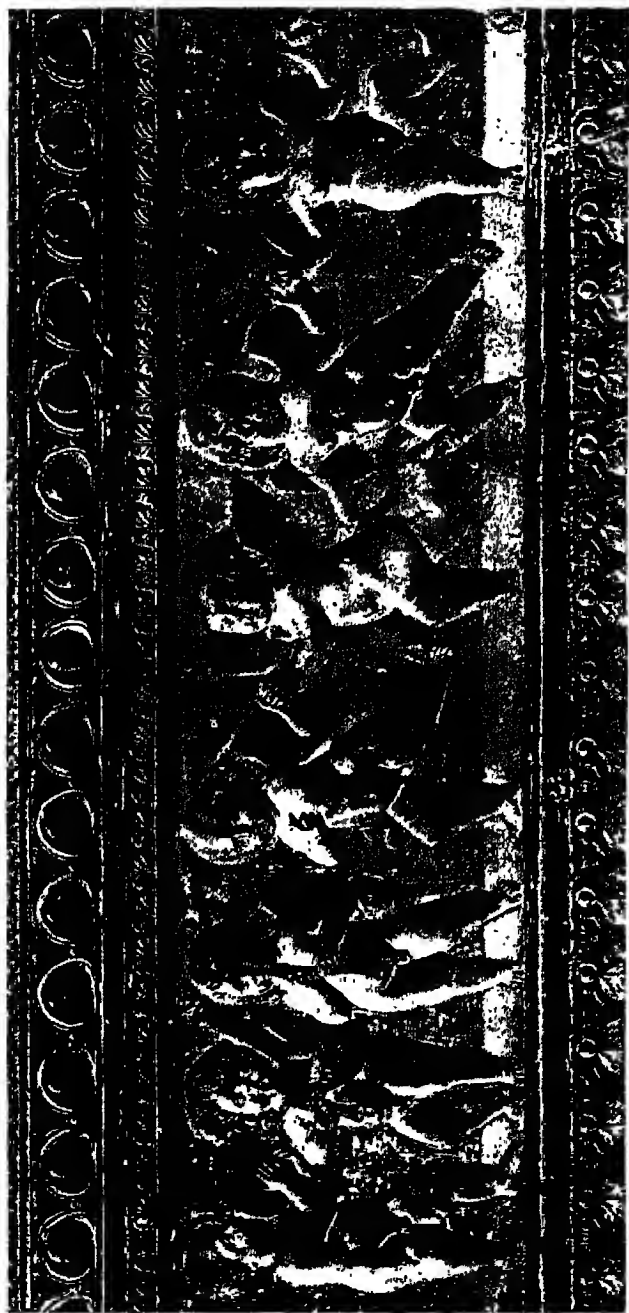
In a niche, framed with rich ornament, on the stairs we see the upright marble figure of Duke Federigo himself, in full Roman armour; then we pass through a long suite of splendid rooms—first the Sala di Guardia (later Sala del Trono), where the Duke’s own guard of men-at-arms were on duty, with the Lion of S. Mark showing him as Condottiere of the Most Serene Republic of Venice; then the apartments of the Duke himself, leading on to those of the Duchess. Stripped bare of their rich furnishings, of the silks and gold brocade which Castiglione has described, we still get a hint of their old splendour in richly-carved marbles of doors and windows, among which are ever entwined the initials—F.C. (Federicus Comes), F.D. (Federicus Dux)—of the Duke himself. In one room only I found the stucco work of the ceiling preserved, where naked winged *putti* still tread daintily on wreathed flowers, with, set in its centre, the eagle of this House of Monte-

feltro; but even more beautiful is the frieze of winged cherubs, dancing and playing instruments of music, on the great chimney in the room called from them the Sala degli Angeli. The decoration here is probably by the Florentine Domenico Rosselli, who was at work elsewhere in the palace, and traces of its old colours in blue and gold yet remain; but in the doors and windows here, as in the rich decoration of the Sala dell'Iole, Senator Venturi has traced—I consider justly—the design of Martini, enriched, amplified by the later decorators—the subtlety, the fine sensitiveness of Francesco losing itself, as in the door facing the Piazza, in the heavier translation of Ambrogio Barocci. And yet in this superb chimney-piece and doors of the Sala degli Angeli it is rather Domenico Rosselli who has followed the design of the Sieneſe Maſter, perhaps keeping ſomething of his inſpiration even in this delicious rout of merry babies who frolic in pure joy of life over the chimney.

But in one decorative creation within the Palace—in its own way a masterpiece—we may, I believe, trace directly the design of Francesco himself. When the latter arrived at Urbino the decoration of the private study (*studiolo*) of Duke Federigo—whose ceiling dates from 1476—was already in hand: but its walls, covered with beautiful intarsia wood-panelling, “were”—as Lionello Venturi has suggested—“the creation of the Sieneſe Maſter, who gave its design to be carried out by the actual craftsmen.” Studying here the allegorical figures, the buildings and landscape in perspective, the exquisite design of the simulated cupboards—their open latticed window revealing armour, books and instruments of music—my own opinion fully coincides in every way with the attribution above quoted.¹

It is impossible for anyone who has studied the art of Martini in painting, drawing and sculpture not to recognize here its inspiration, especially in the two figures of Apollo and Pallas Athene holding her spear and shield,

¹ Senator Venturi, *op. cit.*, has expressed this even more strongly—“it was indubitably upon the design of Francesco that an intarsia worker carried out the views in perspective in the upper panels of the door which leads to the Sala del Seicento”—and goes on to allude to the two figures by that Master here referred to.



17 FRIEZE OF DANCING CHERUBS IN SALA DEGLI ANGELI.

[PALACE OF URBINO.]

which are beautifully introduced in intarsia into the panels of the doors which now lead to the Sala del Seicento; and these bring before us a question of supreme interest. They have that Botticellian character which we trace again and again in Martini's art, and which is a part of its singular fascination. The Pallas, above all, with her long hair unconfined, her upturned glance, her sharply defined draperies, is the true sister of the angels and saints we have described (ch. II) elsewhere: her pose so elastic that—like them, like the *Fidelity* or the *Judith* of the Siena Duomo—she seems to float on air. I do not go so far here as to suggest any direct influence of the Florentine Master, Sandro Botticelli, upon the Siense; though their dates (v. Pt. II) alone make this not so very improbable. But the exquisite type, the precision of drawing is in the art of this Italy of the Cinquecento, in the workshops of the goldsmiths of Florence upon the Ponte Vecchio, in the art of the Pollaiuoli, in the bottega of Verrocchio with Credi and Leonardo among his pupils: we shall find it again in the same goddess, with the proud and passionate poise of her young body, the drapery broken into lovely folds scintillating with little points of light, in a wonderful bronze relief by our Master to which I shall come later—the *Judgment of Paris* lately in the collection of M. Carl Dreyfus at Paris.

When the palace was stripped bare by its later Papal possessors these intarsia panels seem to have been considered of sufficient value to be worth taking, at least in part, and they have wandered far afield, even to the Berlin Museum and the Walter collection of Baltimore, U.S.A.—these latter panels being connected closely, both in treatment and subject, with Francesco's drawings of Rome mentioned earlier (ch. III), and most directly with those of the Magliabecchiana "Codex" in Florence. Here, too, his friend and pupil, whom we shall find later at Siena, Giacomo Cozzarelli ("his companion and dearest friend," says Vasari, "and from him we have the portrait of the aforesaid Francesco which he made with his own hand") may have been working beside him in the exquisite design of a marble window, in the grand door with the eagle of the Montefeltro entwined with lovely acanthus, and on the great chimney of the Sala del Magnifico;

above all, in the door of the Sala di Federigo—its finely spaced architrave inscribed with the Duke's name in golden letters, F.E.DUX, on either side of a flaming grenade—whose noble simplicity has not been, as elsewhere, overwhelmed and suffocated as in the luxuriant decoration of Ambrogio Barocci.¹

From the *Studiolo* of Duke Federigo I made my way to the terrace, hung by Laurana—as in the Castelnuovo at Naples—between two stern mediæval flanking towers; and saw beneath me, bathed in golden sunlight, that wonderful view to which I have referred, the surging lines of Apennines melting in the far distance, with among the other peaks Monte Nerone soaring up against the sky.²

Near the Ducal Palace another building, the Church of San Bernardino, shows traces of the design of Francesco di Giorgio; very markedly the windows, some of which are extremely characteristic, and the beautiful marble entrance door, which may be usefully compared with his undoubted church of the Madonna del Calcinaio of Cortona, to which I shall come in a later chapter.³ Nor must the Palazzo Ligio Passionei at Urbino be forgotten, with its richly carved capitals of acanthus pattern; its door with the legend *Glo(ria) in D(omino)* and its finely arched *cortile*, which is repeated in the ancient Hospital (now used as barracks): for these are of interest as showing, if not the direct design of Francesco, at least that of builders who were attracted and influenced strongly by his genius. But I prefer to turn away from Urbino, at this point, to another palace of great beauty, in which we have good grounds for tracing the hand of the Sienese Master.

¹ Cf. A. Venturi, *op. cit.*, on this point. "Ambrogio Barocci soffoca in un labirinto confuso di ghirighiri le tracce di Francesco di Giorgio."

² Monte Nerone (1531 m.) so called—says Dennistoun—from a legend that the blood-stained tyrant of Rome once dwelt there, is held to be a slumbering volcano; in old times its iron ore was precious, its herbs esteemed above all others in Italy.

³ Cf. A. Venturi, *op. cit.*, ch. IX. "Another work in the capital of the Montefeltri goes back to Francesco di Giorgio; this is the much discussed church of San Bernardino, which does not offer sufficient analogies (*riscontri*) with the known buildings of Bramante, its presumed architect."



18 FIGURE IN INTARSIA OF
PALLAS ATHENE.

[PALACE OF
URBINO-STUDIOLO
DEL DUCA.

At the close of the XIVth century the free city of Gubbio had come by voluntary submission into the hands of the Count of Montefeltro, and had welcomed the young Count (later Duke) Federigo with extraordinary rejoicings. When later he came to marry, Battista Sforza, his consort, took a special affection for Gubbio, and "for her pleasure the Ducal Palace was begun by Federigo in 1470, an imitation, on a smaller scale, of the celebrated Palace of Urbino also called *La Corte*."¹ It seems more than likely that—after having had charge of the Urbino Palace, and giving special attention to the fortresses of the Montefeltro Duchy—Francesco di Giorgio was at Gubbio, occupied on this beautiful Renaissance palace, then being called into being in striking contrast to the frowning severity of the mediæval Palace of the Consuls in the same city below. We have, in fact, documentary evidence of the presence of Francesco in Gubbio, where Luca Signorelli found him when sent on behalf of the city of Cortona (1484) to invite him to design the Church of the Calcinaio; and whence again is dated (1488) a letter from Martini himself to the Balìa of his own city of Siena, which mentions that he was there "on many secret matters (*provisioni segreti*)," possibly of military nature. Let us turn now to the palace itself, which I visited recently, and found in its design and decoration evidence confirming the presence of the Sienese Master. It has been allowed to fall into complete neglect and decay. "In the middle of the last century the palace was sold by public auction for a few hundred crowns, and converted into a silk spinning establishment." Everything of value that could be detached from the walls was torn away and dispersed—the medallions of the *cortile*, the intarsia work of Pier Angelo di Gubbio, carved doors, sculptured chimneys and mouldings; "and now, like some hapless Griselda, shorn of her courtly attire, she faces wind and weather in her grievous nudity, and we can only guess at her former stateliness by the few remains that have been spared." Happily, since these words were written, an effective work of restoration has been put in hand, and is already showing good results; and it is satisfactory to state

¹ Cf. "Gubbio Past and Present," by Laura McCracken, ch. VI.

here that it is the noble generosity of an English donor, a true lover of Gubbio, Colonel Vivian Gabriel, which has made this restoration possible.

I shall return later to this beautiful palace in treating the Civil Architecture of Francesco di Giorgio; but will give here some brief account, especially as compared with the Palace of Urbino. Entering this Ducal Palace, set high on the hillside of Gubbio, we find ourselves at once in a fine courtyard supported by graceful columns of *pietra serena*; the capitals richly carved, as well as the pilasters and windows of the upper story, which is of red brick. Over the doors are the initials of its founder in the letters F.D., while among the decorations are the insignia of the Order of the Garter, bestowed on Duke Federigo by our Tudor King, Henry VII; and this whole courtyard in its serene beauty has been well called "an echo of Laurana's courtyard at Urbino." This *cortile* I found, however, most important to my study, and significant of Martini's design; as well as the doors of the palace, the "grand Sala of the upper floor and the great windows opening on the *cortile*, all of which took certainly their form from the days of Francesco di Giorgio."¹ The medallions in coloured majolica, which must have added greatly to the beauty of this *cortile*, have been ruthlessly torn away; and the beautiful intarsia work of the upper floor is said to have been sold at the time of the dismantling to Prince Lancelotti, and to be now in the Villa Albani at Rome. From the great terrace—now a kitchen garden—the Duke and his courtiers could enjoy the air and sunshine; and look down on the town below, with the older Palazzo dei Consoli and the wide-stretching Umbrian plain. It was in this "Corte" of Gubbio—"where the glad elegance of the art of Francesco is stamped upon the lordly dwelling place"—in this Palace of her delight that Battista Sforza had borne that much prayed-for son, who was to cost her own life. It was here, too, that that son Guidobaldo had spent happy days with his young Duchess Elisabetta Gonzaga in the "jousts and pageants, the musical fêtes and hunting parties of which she was passionately fond"²; yet it was not here, but in the older

¹ Cf. A. Venturi, *op. cit.*

² Cf. L. McCracken, "Gubbio Past and Present."



19 CORTILE OF DUCAL PALACE,
LA CORTE.

[AT GUBBIO.

and more splendid palace of Urbino that Castiglione had placed the scene of his famous "Dialogue of the Perfect Courtier," the characters of which belong, however, to a later generation.

For Duke Federigo had then passed away, and been succeeded by his son Guidobaldo. The Borgia Duke Valentino had made his sudden swoop on this rich prey of Urbino and her Palace; and had carried off to Rome on muleback across the mountains many of its treasures of art and learning. Then had come (1503) the dramatic and terrible end of the Borgia power, and their enemy and successor, Pope Julius II, "having by his own power and the help of France reduced Bologna to obedience in the year MDVI on his return to Rome passed by Urbino"; and had been received there in great state by Duke Guidobaldo and his Duchess Elisabetta Gonzaga. Even in those evil times which had now befallen Italy, with the armies of Spain and France at war upon her soil, this Court of Urbino remained a last and most brilliant survival of better days. Castiglione mentions among the courtiers there present at this time the Magnificent Giuliano de' Medici (later Duke of Nemours), the great scholar and churchman Messer Pietro Bembo, Messer Cesare Gonzaga, the Count of Canossa, Messer Bernardo Bibiena, Messer Accolti called "l'Unico Aretino," and the Lord Gaspar Pallavicino; and among the ladies the witty and charming Lady Emilia Pia, widow of the Duke's half-brother Antonio, and an intimate friend of the Duchess—all of whom, "after the departure of the Pope and his Court"—says Castiglione—"being attracted by the sweetness of this company had remained for many days at Urbino."

The order of their entertainment, he then tells us, was "that immediately they had come into the presence of the Duchess each one took his seat in a circle, in such way that each man sat beside a lady, as long as the ladies lasted, for the number of the men was far greater; and for the most part the Duchess gave the charge of their entertainment to the Lady Emilia." Thus it is that the discussion begins, when the company had tired of dancing and games, and soon becomes centered upon the character and mental and physical equipment of the "complete Courtier" (*perfetto Cortigiano*); what are to be his acquirements,

his social position—whether of noble birth or base—his knowledge of weapons and games, even his dress, for dark colours had come in then with the Spanish influence, and “methinks”—says Castiglione, who was ambassador of Rome in Madrid—“a black colour hath a better grace in garments than any other”; then next his knowledge of the arts—for in music and painting he must be informed, if not proficient, and “truly one who esteems not this art” (of painting) “is, to my seeming, far away from reason”; next the due use of jest, the precious quality of friendship, the demeanour due from him to men of all ranks and stations, and, above all, to his own prince.

For the writer was himself a man of wide culture, who had held high posts in the courts of his age at Mantua, Rome and Madrid, had shared in all its culture, and had great scholars and artists—among them Raphael himself, who painted him as Pythagoras in his “School of Athens”—as his personal friends; and the discussion not infrequently breaks off into delightful side paths, such as the relative merits of sculpture and painting—“for both start from the same point, which is good design”—when the great sculptor Cristoforo Romano is charged by the Lady Emilia to give his own verdict. Above all, the “perfect Courtier,” whether in the Court or world without, must have, as the hall mark of gentle bearing, a certain nonchalance. “But the seasoning of all shall be his own discretion, and, since we cannot foresee all the chances that may happen,” being judge of himself he must know his own age, and accommodate himself to his hearers; and saying always, doing always, just the right thing, shall do or say it naturally, without affectation and without emphasis, as if it were for him the only thing that could be done.

Then, when the “perfect Courtier” has been analyzed and defined, comes yet another and not less interesting question, what shall be the character and attributes of his feminine counterpart, the Court Lady, the “Donna di Palazzo”? Here the dialogue (Books III and IV) becomes somewhat racy in detail (for much was permitted in that age, as in the England of Elizabeth, which would be excluded now), and develops very often into a delightful duel between the Lady Emilia and the assumed (for their

attitude seems only part of the game) woman-haters, Lord Gaspar Pallavicino and Messer Cesare Gonzaga. There is little doubt that our Shakespeare knew in some form this world-famed "Book of the Courtier"¹; and if, as has been suggested, he had drawn from it in some measure his Prince Hamlet of Denmark, it is even more likely that he took thence his inspiration for those delightful characters of Benedick and Beatrice in his "Much Ado about Nothing."

In conclusion (Book IV), the question at issue turns aside into a discussion on Love; and it is Messer Pietro Bembo—the great scholar and Latinist, later to become Cardinal—who is finally pressed, almost commanded, by the petulant and charming Emilia, in her Duchess' name, to give his opinion on this delicate and debatable subject. He does this in a passage which, steeped in the Platonic conceptions of the age preceding, of Marcilio Ficino and the scholars who were in the Florentine circle of Lorenzo the Magnificent, soars up at the last to an impassioned praise of the Heavenly Beauty. "When therefore our Courtier has reached this point, so that from the individual beauty of the one lady of his love he shall have come to contemplate the universal beauty, I would not have him content with this. But, taking his eyes from all these earthly beauties he shall turn them within himself; and in this constant contemplation opening them again, as if released from slumber and now unconfined, shall feel a certain hidden sense (*un certo odor nascoso*) of the true beauty of the angels; and seized by the splendour of that vision of light commence himself to become inflamed; and so greedily follow its beckoning that he shall be even as one drunk and beyond himself, and seeming to have come upon the very track of God. Then shall he, burning in that happiest flame, lift himself up in his most noble part, that of the mind and spirit, and there, no longer shadowed by the dark night of earthly things, shall see the beauty which is Divine.

"This is the funeral pyre in which the poets sing that Hercules was burned upon Mount Oeta, and through this

¹ "The Book of the Courtier" was "done into English" by Sir Thomas Hoby, anno 1561, and has been recently republished in an attractive and accessible form by J. M. Dent and E. P. Dutton.

consuming with fire became after death immortal and divine. This the burning bush of Moses; the tongues forked with fires; the flaming chariot of Elias which, leaving this earthly baseness, flew upwards towards Heaven. . . . What mortal tongue then, O most holy LOVE, shall be able to hymn worthily thy praise? Thou fairest, best, wisest, comest from the union of beauty, goodness and divine wisdom; in that thou dwellest, and thither must ever return. Deign only, dear Lord, to hear our prayers, and pour Thyself into our hearts; with the splendour of Thy most holy flame to illumine our darkness, and, a faithful guide, in this blind labyrinth show us the true way of life."¹

Over the throng of courtiers and their ladies, with the thrust and fence of argument, as the speaker ended a silence had fallen. "For Bembo, having spoken at the end with such vehemence that he seemed beside himself, stood still and motionless, his eyes fixed on heaven, as if entranced; when the Lady Emilia, who with the others had listened with the greatest attention to his argument, took him by the hem of his robe, and, shaking it a little, said: 'Take care, Messer Pietro, that with these thoughts you do not deprive your soul of your body.' 'Lady mine'—replied Messer Pietro—"this would not be the first miracle that Love has worked in me."

Then, as the discussion would recommence on the point (raised by Messer Cesare Gonzaga) whether this divine love, difficult enough for men, might not be impossible for women, the Duchess, "seeing it was late, would put it off until tomorrow. 'Nay, then this evening,' replied Messer Cesare; and showed to them the light beginning to enter through the slits of the windows. Everyone rose up in great astonishment, for it had not seemed to them that the talk had lasted longer than was their wont, nor had any felt in their eyes the heaviness of sleep. Opening then the windows, on the side of the

¹ I have been compelled to condense somewhat this beautiful argument, which Messer Bembo is said to have corrected himself before it was published in book form. When Castiglione died it was Bembo who composed, in choicest Latin, the inscription on his friend's tomb in S. Maria delle Grazie without Mantua. V. my "The Gonzaga, Lords of Mantua," ch. IX.

palace which looks on the lofty peak of Monte Catri, they saw that in the east was born already a fair dawn of rose colour, and all the stars had vanished, save only Venus, sweet governess of the heavens, who holds the confines of both night and day; from whom it seemed that a soft breeze was breathing which, with its tingling freshness, filled the air, while in the whispering woods of neighbouring hills began to wake the sweet concert of singing birds. Whereupon they all, taking leave with due reverence of their Lady Duchess, went to their rooms without torches, for the light of day served their need."

Yet Castiglione is too fine an artist to end, even on this exquisite note of the dawn seen from that airy terrace of the old Corte. Beatrice must get in her last word against Benedick, and the Lady Emilia claim that "Lord Gaspar, that accuser of women, shall give pledge for his return to finish the argument; seeing that I hold him but a fugitive and suspect."

CHAPTER V

WAR IN TUSCANY

WE have now to return to the time when this Palace of the Corte was still building; Duke Federigo yet ruling his little principality of Montefeltro, and, as Gonfaloniere, leading the armies of the Church; with Francesco di Giorgio at his side, as architect and military engineer, sharing to the full that marvellous cultured life of the mid-Renaissance of which this Court was a centre. Then, suddenly, the flaming tide of war swept through these sunny hills and plains of Umbria and Tuscany; the characters of our story become at once involved in its fortunes; and to trace the sequence of events we must glance briefly at the condition of Italy in their time.

The old Republics were mostly gone, changed into local princedoms or absorbed by stronger States. In their place five great States then held dominion through Italy—Venice; Milan, with her Sforza Dukes; then Florence, still nominally a Republic, but under the cultured sway of her Medici merchant princes; Rome, with the Papal States; Naples under the House of Aragon. It was ever the wise policy of Lorenzo de' Medici, called the Magnificent, to hold these States in balance and at peace; but the conspiracy of the Pazzi, directed against his own life and that of his brother Giuliano—who was actually killed at mass in the Florence Duomo—and undoubtedly engineered from Rome by Pope Sixtus V, set at once the whole peninsula in a blaze. I have given already a careful account, based on the records of the time, of this conspiracy, and do not propose to enter into it further here; but its results form an integral part of our story, for Duke Federigo was, as we have seen, General of the Armies of the Church; and when Sixtus V, furious at the failure of his murderous scheme, put Florence with her rulers and lands under the ban of excommunication and joined forces with the King of Naples to invade her territory, it was the Duke of Urbino, leading the Papal troops, with the Duke of Calabria over those of Naples, who commanded the armies of the League. On the other hand, Florence, threatened by these formidable enemies,

had found sympathy in North Italy, the support of Milan—due to her constant friendly relations with the Sforza—and had secured the Duke of Ferrara and Marquis of Mantua to lead her forces; and the first clash of the armies beside Lake Trasimene, the scene of Hannibal's victory over the Romans, was so far in her favour that her troops could advance to invest Perugia.

There can be no possible blame attached to Duke Federigo for having held command in an unjust war of aggression, which had been prefaced by murder. He was a Condottiere by profession, in the pay of the Church both in peace and war, and had to do his work when so ordered. The Florentine forces were in like manner under princes who were, as soldiers, professional Condottieri; and the weakness of this whole system of mercenary warfare comes into very strong relief in this campaign. The Marquis of Mantua, having quarrelled with the Duke of Ferrara, returned home with his own forces from the Florentine command. "The Duke of Calabria, finding the Florentines to have lost their leader and to be weakened in numbers, advancing rapidly from Chiusi by way of Siena, made a sudden and successful attack on the Florentine position at Poggio Imperiale. The Florentines, taken by surprise and without confidence in their new leaders, took to flight. The way to the city was left open, and there followed something like a panic in Florence. Fortunately Costanzo Sforza rallied his own troops, and the Duke of Calabria, instead of taking his advantage, sat down with his army to invest the fortified town of Colle. The siege proved a long one, and possesses special interest in the conditions of its defence and eventual capture. The Duke of Urbino had brought with him in this campaign, as his military engineer, the famous Francesco di Giorgio Martini, and artillery was used on both sides in the defence as well as the attack of strong places."¹

The campaign at this time turned into a warfare of sieges, which, though expensive for both parties and inconclusive, comes to possess at this point very great interest for our own study, and may almost be said to

¹ Cf. Selwyn Brinton, "The Golden Age of the Medici," ch. VII.

date a new epoch in the conduct of war. Certaldo and Poggibonsi had already fallen to the forces of the Church and Naples, but Colle di Val d'Elsa made a stouter resistance; and the difficulties in those days of a siege train with this new weapon of artillery find expression in the diary of an eye witness, Alleghetti of Siena.¹ Duke Federigo had with him for siege purposes five bombards, with most terrifying names, such as the *Cruel*, *Desperate*, *Victory*, *Ruin* and *No Nonsense Here*, and which, without doubt, were beautifully decorated, as was the fashion with the Italian cannon at this time: they discharged great balls of stone, weighing 370-380 pounds, and their own weight was considerable, the tubes, when nine feet long, weighing some 14,000 pounds and the tail 11,000, so that it required more than one hundred pairs of buffaloes to drag them into position. "The art of casting these early cannon in two portions, the tube and tail, was pursued in Siena; and though they might not have had much effect on the result of a modern battle, at this time they were a formidable novelty. Francesco di Giorgio in the siege of Castellina (August 14-18, 1478) planted a battery of these Sienese and Papal bombards, and—in spite of the fact that the architect and military engineer of Lorenzo de Medici,² Giuliano di San Gallo, was among the defenders—in four days he opened a breach in the walls, and captured the city; but in the case of Colle there were bombards also used for defence, and during the siege of six weeks 1,024 shots were fired on both sides." The difficulties of siege transport find expression in Duke Federigo's frequent—and almost frantic—dispatches to the Balia of Siena. "Since the powder for the bombard," he writes, "which you sent me is not fit to be fired and will not answer the purpose, I pray you to let me have some as soon as possible that will do the business. And I further pray you to see that the other bombard be forwarded with all speed"; and yet later, from the camp before Colle, "the muzzle of the last bombard which burst is still here, for its carriage broke

¹ Note quoted by Dennistoun, *op. cit.*, ch. XI.

² The presence of Giuliano at Castellina has been disputed by some authorities, but he was certainly helping to fortify Colle. V. Rocchi, *op. cit.*

down on the march and was left by the way. I therefore earnestly beg your Lordships to send hither all the Pope's and His Majesty's buffaloes that you have and as many of your own as possible, with such oxen as you can . . . and, in God's name if ever you use diligence do so now, that these carts, oxen and buffaloes arrive quickly." In spite of these difficulties Colle fell before the Papal and Sienese artillery on November 14th, 1479; but Florence, which lay open to her enemies after the disaster at Poggio Imperiale, had been allowed time to organize her defence and recall her troops from Perugia, and it was now time, at the close of November, for the troops on both sides, as was customary in those days, to retire into their winter quarters.

While his bombards were hurling their great stone balls into Colle, which was soon to fall before their attack, Francesco di Giorgio in the camp of the Leagued Armies, as chief of their artillery and military engineer—the *præfectus fabrum* of the Roman legions—though perhaps inspired by his recent success at Castellina, must have often turned his thoughts to the insistent and absorbing question of the new methods of attack and defence, and the means, if any, of recovering their just and necessary equilibrium. That these thoughts were not altogether easy or pleasant ones we have the proof of his own words; for we see reflected in them the difficulties of the problem which then came overwhelmingly before his mind. If we were to imagine—and, most unhappily, it is not so difficult for those who have been through the horrors of the Great War—some new and yet more terrible invention, which would wipe out whole cities and their population, would paralyze every human effort at resistance, then we shall have some idea of the question which came before Martini and the men of his time.

We may see something of the way they felt from an episode in an immortal poem of those days—the "Orlando Furioso" of Lodovico Ariosto. The Frisian King, a tyrant of the Eccelino breed, has secured himself by the sole possession of a terrible weapon, a "certain hollow iron and fire" which with its thunder shakes the earth, levels strong walls and makes their stones fly up to the skies. When the Paladin—at whom he had made a bad

shot, through being nervous and in a hurry—ends his tyranny by removing his head, and restores the city and her lands to the lovely and wronged Olympia, the victor knight asks no other reward than the possession of this infernal weapon, and that not for his own use, but to hurl it into the depths of the sea. Then, as it sinks for ever, he addresses the accursed “tool of evil, forged in the lowest hell by the hand of Beelzebub himself,” whither it shall now return :

“ Ò maladetto, Ò abominoso ordigno,
Che fabricato nel tartareo fondo
Fosti per man di Belzebù maligno

À l'Inferno, onde uscisti, ti rassigno;”¹

Lodovico Ariosto wrote these lines at the Court of Ferrara, where Duke Alfonso I (who succeeded Ercole I in 1505) was one of the most famous gun founders of his time, and considered to have the finest artillery of that age; but this did not prevent the poet from evidently voicing public opinion in his detestation of the new weapons which destroyed the old warfare of Chivalry, and brought its haughty towers tumbling to the ground. As elsewhere in this work—but here especially—I am approaching a subject in which I am in no sense a specialist, and here again must appeal for my reader's sympathy and critical assistance. But to my judgment it seems that there have always been—and must always be—these two conflicting problems of attack and defence; and that, as soon as ever some fresh and more powerful weapon of attack is discovered, so surely will human ingenuity work out some new method of defence. In Francesco's time, however, this new weapon of gun fire seemed overwhelming in its possible results. He observes himself that the implements of attack in former days “were not of such size, or so effective, or so ingeniously worked out as at present; but now every very large bombard in any place whatever being brought into action will with comparative ease (*trattabile modo*) very quickly put every wall, every tower before it into ruins.” At Castellina he had been attacking, and his great bombards had effectually carried out his

¹ Cf. “Orlando Furioso.” Canto IX, at the end.

programme; but at Urbino he was military adviser to his Duke, engaged on building for him many castles, and it was up to him to find a new and no less effective reply to this new and terrible offensive.

Martini is always—as we shall see when we come (ch. VI) to his “Trattato”—essentially practical in his method; and he first approaches this problem, very properly, by a careful and exact analysis and list of the heavy and smaller guns in use in Italy in his own time. In the “Trattato” he gives ten kinds, commencing with the heavier bombards or mortars used in sieges, then the *mezzane*, *cortane*, *passavolanti*, *basilisci* and *spingarde*; lastly, the *arcibuso* and *scopietto* which preceded, before 1470, the later forms of arquebus and were both managed by hand. The larger pieces of artillery used at this time were often called *Colubrine*, and two very fine specimens were cast in 1487 by Sigismondo Alberghetti, the head of a family of gun founders at Ferrara; these two guns were for the Republic of Venice, and are very beautiful in design, the base resembling a Corinthian capital, and, in the spirit of their age, they carry appropriate Latin inscriptions.¹ But the bombard itself goes back as far as 1378, and is described by Andrea Redusio “as an instrument of iron in which a round stone is placed, having behind it a breech in which a black powder is inserted composed of saltpeter, sulphur, etc.”²

What, may we ask at this point, was the position of Francesco, with his thorough knowledge, both in theory and practice, of the existing methods of attack to the no less—but even more—important question of defence? He had seen, in command of his own guns at Castellina and Corte, something of the tremendous offensive power of this new weapon of artillery; yet as engineer to his Duke, as military architect for him of numerous fortresses,

¹ The date of these cannon disposes of the assertion that the French in their invasion of Italy (1494) under Charles VIII had been the first to use guns of this kind; but they evidently attached great importance to their artillery, and carried it back with them in the front of their army in the passage of the Taro. V. “The Gonzaga, Lords of Mantua,” ch. VII.

² “Est instrumentum ferreum cum trumba anteriore in qua lapis rotundus imponitur, habens cannonem a parte posteriore in quo imponitur pulvis niger, artificiatu cum salnitrio et sulphure, etc.”

some of which still exist, he found himself compelled to give an answer to this question of defence—an answer which obviously could not be met by the then existing methods. There can be no doubt that this question weighed very heavily, even upon his fertile and inventive mind. He had seen with his own eyes the old “balance between attack and defence broken by fire arms, to the loss of the latter.” He saw the necessity of opposing the new methods of attack by new forms of fortification; and, weighing this problem with its immense difficulties, he observes that “he who to this offensive” (that is to the progress of artillery in his own time) “could find the proper defensive would merit to be called of more divine than merely human genius.”¹

The question could not be answered in a moment. It haunts his mind, in fact, through all the pages of his “Trattato,” through all his numerous drawings of fortresses, of their design, attack and defence. It is, indeed, long before he can reach its solution. But, at its very beginning, he approaches the question with a statement which at once cuts right into the main issue; and which, profoundly—to us almost obviously—true, must have seemed original, perhaps even startling, to the men of his time. “The goodness of fortresses”—he writes in his “Trattato”—“exists in the artifice of their planning rather than in the thickness of the walls.”

For already, to his keen mind, those older methods of defence were, in this Italy of mid-Renaissance, becoming obviously obsolete, almost ridiculous. When the enemy approached a mediæval stronghold, armed only with lances, swords and bows and arrows, it may have been a good scheme, having first pulled up the drawbridge, to drop on him—when conveniently near—boiling oil, heavy stones and such like from the towers, which had protruding battlements and narrow slits for this very purpose, and were already sometimes arranged for a flanking defensive. But before this new and terrible weapon of artillery these missiles hurled from above—these “difese piombanti”—disappeared along with the towers themselves; which, preserved for a time as a

¹ Cf. the “Trattato di Architettura,” Lib. I, ch. III; as well as Col. Rocchi’s admirable remarks on this important passage.

sentimental adjunct, gradually tend to recede until they become centred, unified in the great "Mastio" or "Rocca," the citadel and central tower of defence, which even itself, at the last, is not destined to remain.

What, then, is to come in their place? The problem pursued by Martini through the many drawings of his "Trattato"—very specially in those of the Magliabecchiana "Codex"—tends to resolve itself into this great central tower, protected by a whole network of walls and bastions, half concealed, guarded by ditches, and exposing the enemy's attack at every point to a harassing flanking fire. The development of this new idea in his mind is very gradual, is the result of many "tâtonnements," probably of hours of close reflection. As Colonel Rocchi very justly observes: "this step across from the old to the new is always accomplished laboriously. There are the old fundamental ideas, the traditional forms, on which the new commence to assert themselves with more or less discomfort, giving opening for singular and often fantastic plannings (*disposizioni*) which hold to the old and beckon to the new, but in a manner yet indeterminate and uncertain. Then, gradually, amid a thousand tentatives and 'pentimenti,' the new forms become little by little accentuated; until at last the old is gone, the new type affirmed and apparent in all its true character. Precisely such," he adds, "is the story of the art of fortification in the second half of the XVth century, before the growing power of artillery fire."¹

It is rather, in fact, in his drawings that we may trace the progress of this new idea within Martini's mind than in the yet remaining fortresses—though these may be of some help to us in following that development—of the many strongholds erected by him for his Duke. In the "Trattato," his great treatise on architecture—which I shall take as a whole in the succeeding chapter—he gives us sixty examples of different fortresses, set among the mountains or by the sea, on a hillside or spur of a mountain, in valley or plain; mentioning especially, among those designed by him for his Duke, the Sasso di Montefeltro, Tavoletto, and the Serra di S. Abondio; while those of

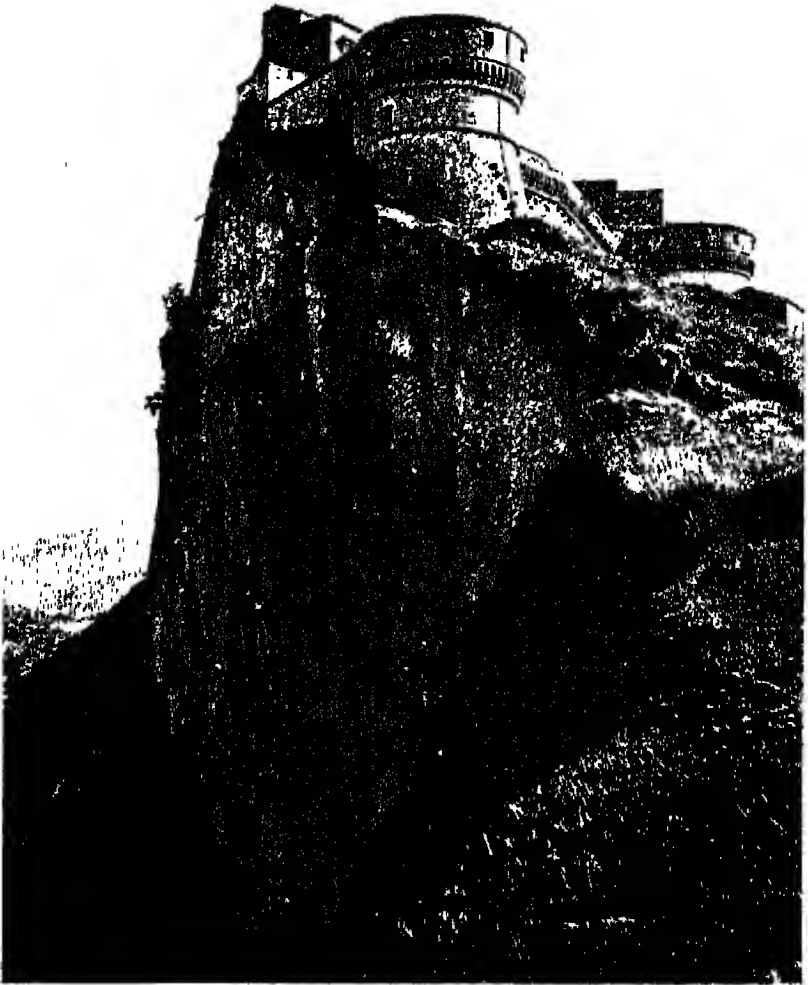
¹ Cf. E. Rocchi, "L'Opera e Tempi di Francesco di Giorgio," II, p. 16.

Mondavio and Mondolfo (between Sinigaglia and Fossombrone) were planned by him for Giovanni della Rovere, nephew of Sixtus IV, Duke of Sora and Lord of Sinigaglia.

It was evidently the plan of Duke Federigo to guard his beloved little State, set among the mountains, by a ring of almost impregnable fortresses, designed by his chosen engineer and architect; but after his death they suffered in the troublous times which followed, some being destroyed by the Borgia in his sudden swoop upon Urbino; others by Duke Guidobaldo himself, since he had not sufficient forces left for their garrisons. The Rocca of Sasso Corvaro, with her massive bastions, an example of his fine planning; Fossombrone, with her Ducal Palace, holding within it great chimneys, carved frieze and coffered ceilings; above all, San Leo, with her wonderful legend, her great "torrioni," reminiscent of the towers of the Corte of Urbino, stretched out on the sheer naked rock "with the graceful poise of a gigantic bird with its wings outspread"—all seem to illustrate that saying of Francesco in his "Trattato" that the planning of a fortress constitutes its true security, and "give us the conception, in their graceful forms, of freedom subordinate to mass even in the expression of immense strength."¹

The story of San Leo deserves a place here as an example of the vicissitudes of these mountain strongholds of the Montefeltro. Set high on the rock, its summit had once been crowned by a temple of Jupiter Feretrius (whence Feltro may derive its name); then was occupied in Christian times by a hermit, who, becoming canonized for his ascetic virtues, bequeathed to the rock of his residence his own name; and not the least of its attractions was a spring of pure water near its summit. It had been captured by Count Federigo, and its naturally strong position probably further strengthened by his architect; when later the other fortresses of the Duchy fell into the hands of Cæsar Borgia, San Leo held out for Duke Guidobaldo until it was betrayed by its commander, Scarmiglione. Castiglione, in his "Cortigiano," among

¹ Cf. A. Venturi, *op. cit.*, ch. IX.



21 FORTRESS OF S. LEO.

witty replies, gives that of Duke Guidobaldo to that traitorous Castellano, who presented himself at Venice with his excuses and hopes to recover San Leo for his master. "Do not trouble yourself with that," replied the Duke, "for your having lost it was already one step towards its recovery."¹ And, in fact, the fortress was recovered by the Duke's own subjects, who surprised and slaughtered Borgia's officers, and captured the fortress with their old war-cry of "Feltro, Feltro! the Duke, the Duke!"—which, resounding through the mountain passes, reached Gubbio, Cagli, Fossombrone and Urbino itself, all of which rose in revolt and declared for Duke Guidobaldo. Though the Borgia returned to take a fearful vengeance on Fossombrone, San Leo held out stoutly for her own Duke, until he could return in triumph to Urbino; but in the struggle to preserve his Duchy by a later Duke, Francesco Maria della Rovere, against another Pope, Leo X, San Leo, in spite of its immense strength, was once again surprised and captured by the Papal armies.

In these fortresses Francesco di Giorgio had already, in some measure, given his answer to this problem of defence. In modern times a German expert, an authority on this very subject, taking one of these castles as a base for his argument, has declared that "Martini has grasped the nature of the bastion and brought it to expression";² while in his "Trattato" the Master himself, after giving twenty rules as to the parts that a fortress should contain, uses these significant words: "I have thought out a defence against bombards of very limited expense, time in making and convenience in material"—proceeding then to further definition of its form. But at this point it has seemed to me better to defer further study of this most interesting question to the succeeding chapter—which I shall devote to the "Treatise of Architecture, Civil and

¹ Cf. "Cortigiano," Lib. II; quoted also by Dennistoun, *op. cit.* vol. I, ch. XVIII. I am much indebted to Sig. Curzio Belli for the admirable photographs specially taken by him of this wonderful fortress city of S. Leo, his own birthplace.

² Cf. Colonel Schroeder, "Archiv für Artillerie Offiziere, 1891. Martini und die bastionierte Front." I shall refer to this important contribution to our subject in the next chapter.

Military," and whose latter portion, dealing with military architecture, is largely occupied with this very subject of fortresses and their defence—and to turn now to a subject of no less interest, which will find here its appropriate place.

The *Biccherna* had long been an institution in old Siena. "Into this great public office were paid all customs, taxes, dues, fines and tributes of the Commune, and paid out salaries of State officials, of mercenary troops, of artists and craftsmen engaged on public works, as well as public charities—all entered minutely in the Communal account books. This great Ministry of Finance was presided over by a Chamberlain (*camarlingo*) and four lesser officials (*proveditori*); they were elected every six months, and twice a year they had to make ready their accounts. . . . The same system prevailed in the *Gabella*, a department more closely devoted to collecting taxes and customs; and towards the middle of the thirteenth century, about 1250, it seems to have occurred to a *camarlingo* to emblazon his arms and those of his four *proveditori*, together with its title, on the cover of his account book."¹

Out of these beginnings came the *Tavolette*—from a simple book-cover, adorned at first with the arms or portrait of the *camarlingo* of the current year, to "assume the character of historical paintings, dealing each with some phase of Siena's tumultuous history and painted by the best artists she had produced." The thesis of Ambrogio Lorenzetti's great fresco (v. ch. I) of the Palazzo Pubblico reappears in a *Gabella* of 1344, its subject an "Allegory of Good Government," perhaps painted by this Master's own hand; and again in the *Biccherna* of 1385, where citizens still hold the rope of concord—a treatment which may represent a pious aspiration, but seems very like a satire; for that very year saw one of the most bloodthirsty revolutions which that unhappy Republic has upon her

¹ Cf. my "The Republic of Siena (Renaissance in Italian Art)," Part II, in which I give a careful account of the history of these *Biccherna* and *Gabella*. In writing this I had the kind assistance of Cav. Lisini, then head of the Archivio of Siena, and of my late friend, Mr. William Heywood, who placed at my disposal the proofs of his interesting work, "A Pictorial Chronicle of Siena," which he subsequently published.



record. These *Tavolette* are now carefully preserved in the Archivio at Siena; and when I visited them last I was especially attracted by those of Giovanni di Paolo in his "Archangel Michael," and of Sano di Pietro in his "Wisdom sent forth from God" (1470), and his "Marriage of Lucrezia Malavolti" (1473). This is, indeed, the richest period of these book-covers, and it is now that Francesco di Giorgio comes before us with his *Gabella* (1479) of the armies of Siena, with her Allies under the Duke of Calabria, encamped in the Val d'Elsa. Before this he had painted (1460) the *Gabella* of Pius II (the great Sienese Pope of the Piccolomini family) creating his nephew a Cardinal; and later (1480) his charming creation of the Virgin, presenting her city of Siena to the mercy and loving care of Christ. He had treated a similar subject in a *Tavoletta* (1467) of Madonna protecting Siena in the time of earthquakes; but nothing could exceed the charm and beautiful spacing of this cover of 1480, in which the Virgin holds her city set in miniature on a kind of tray, its walls and towers (including the Mangia, with six other lofty towers now gone) complete, while Christ leans forth from the clouds above. The legend before this lovely kneeling figure of Mary is telling her Lord that "This is my own city" (*Haec est civitas mea*); and it is worth noting here that Francesco has introduced beneath his picture the arms of the "respectable citizens in charge (*exeguitori*) of *Gabella* in those years (1479-1480)"; thus going back to what had been the earlier traditional treatment, but keeping both lettering, arms and picture each in their own place and delightfully decorative in feeling. Or again (1483), he depicts the Virgin as heavenly advocate of Siena (v. ch. I); to whom, in the *Tavoletta* of that year, the keys of the city are solemnly presented. In fact, that very year there had been yet another solemn dedication of Siena to her heavenly protectress, in the vain hope of appeasing civil discords; but peace was not to come to the city until at last one strong man, Pandolfo Petrucci, called the Magnificent, brought back the older party of the Noveschi, and ruled with a firm hand.¹ Just that quality

¹ V. my list of paintings for these *Gabelle* in their titles, dates and order of time; in making my list of these I was, as stated, assisted by Cav. Lisini and the late Mr. William Heywood.

of Francesco's art to which I have alluded in speaking (ch. II) of his paintings, and again (ch. IV) of the intarsia panels of the Corte, that individual beauty of type and clean precision of drawing (recalling often the art of the Florentine Botticelli) reappears through these delightful *Tavolette*, just as in his miniatures—as if in these smaller compositions his fancy found more free expression. We shall now find it in a work on a larger scale; but which, if less certain, is not of less interest.

The pavement of Siena Cathedral is an art creation as distinctive to that city as even the *Biccherna*, but of even greater importance.¹ In my last visit to the Duomo I was so fortunate as to find this pavement for several days uncovered, and so had a full opportunity of studying at my leisure these wonderful designs. From its first conception of white marble outlined in black stucco a long series of great craftsmen—from Domenico di Niccolo, chief master of the Opera del Duomo (1413-1428), and the later Domenico di Bartolo to the beautiful detail of Matteo di Giovanni's designs, of Pinturicchio's "Allegory of Fortune" (1555-6), and Beccafumi's later "Story of Moses"—had continued to develop the idea until it came to fill the length and breadth of the great Cathedral. Here I shall confine myself to one subject which particularly attracted my attention.

I had just seen Matteo's wonderful "Massacre of the Innocents," with its enthroned tyrant, its tempest of tossing forms, of tortured mothers, dying children, and swords upraised for murder; and came next to that less frenzied battle scene of the "Relief of Bethulia," with its noble architectural background of a walled and towered medieval city, and the episode—cleverly introduced into the middle distance—of the legend of Judith and Holofernes. Coming to this subject, as I then did, direct from my study of Francesco's drawings in the Communal Library of Siena, I was seized at once with their resemblance here, in architectural details, of temples, towers, windows and carved reliefs; but this impression, strong already, became yet more confirmed in the figures of the

¹ V. Selwyn Brinton, "Republic of Siena," "Renaissance in Italian Art," and for a more detailed treatment of this subject, "The Pavement Masters of Siena, 1369-1562," by Robert H. Hobart Cust, M.A., 1901. See also Edmund Gardner's "Story of Siena."



By *F. di Giorgio* (?)

23 RELIEF OF BETHULIA.

[SIENA CATHEDRAL, PAVEMENT.]

story of Judith, both where, within his tent, she strikes down the enemy of her land, and still more where, in her escape, she crosses the hillside followed by her faithful maid. I have before me a pencil study which I made at the time; and feel now, as then, that these figures are absolutely true to Francesco in type and movement. Like the *Fidelity*, lately in the hands of Professor Langton Douglas, like the Angels of the *Nativity* in S. Domenico of Siena, or the *Pallas* outlined in intarsia within the Duke's *studiolo*, this Judith seems to walk on air—so lithe, so nimble is her gracious movement; and here, too, comes before us just that Botticellian character, in refined beauty of type (we sense her a lovely blonde) and clean, sharp, precise drawing of the drapery. Does the actual documentary evidence here either negative or make such an attribution as the above in any way a possible suggestion?

The inscription—which I noted as *TEMPORE. D. SAVINI MATHEI. M C C C C L X X I I I*. gives its date as 1473 during the rectorship of Matteo di Guido Savino, who was, on January 26, 1480, deposed as being one of the "Riformatori"; and from Tizio (*Historia Senese*, vol. IV.) we gather that it was laid down in 1473 and the beautiful frieze of reels (*naspatoii*) carried out by Urbano di Pietro da Cortona and other craftsmen. Thence the whole design has been attributed either to Urbano or to Matteo di Giovanni, and its execution to that fine sculptor and architect Antonio Federighi; but later it was modernized to some extent in 1790 by Carlo Amidei and Matteo Pini, so that we cannot say precisely what then may have been altered. I can see nothing convincingly suggestive of Matteo in this subject; and the design, from whatever source, may have been carried through by some local craftsman. But I find that my above suggestion, made quite independently, meets unexpected support in a note by my friend Mr. Hobart Cust, who says, speaking of Judith and her maid crossing the background—"these two figures recall the work of Francesco di Giorgio; compare pictures by him in the Church of S. Domenico and the Siena Academy."¹

¹ Cf. Robert H. Hobart Cust, *op. cit.*, p. 67. I find at the same time that the late William Heywood, in his very reliable "Guide to Siena" (page 286) describes this portion of the pavement as "Relief of Bethulia—author unknown—Francesco di Giorgio?"

With this support from an expert authority on the Pavement Masters of Siena, I venture to include among them the name of Francesco di Giorgio; and—as it is most unlikely (almost impossible) that he would design two figures alone out of a great subject—to suggest that this whole composition of the “Relief of Bethulia” may be from his original design, but carried out, very possibly, by Federighi or some local craftsman of Siena. Francesco would thus take the position justly merited by his great place in the art of Siena, beside his contemporaries Matteo di Giovanni, Benvenuto, Minella, his old partner Neroccio, if not also his own friend and pupil Cozzarelli, among the Pavement Masters of Siena.¹

¹ The Hellespontine Sibyl, with behind her the wolf (of Siena) and lion (Marzocco of Florence) shaking paws, is by Neroccio; the Lybian Sibyl by Guidoccio Cozzarelli. The work here claimed for Giacomo in the west façade is of less significance and certainty.

CHAPTER VI

THE TREATISE OF ARCHITECTURE

THE "Treatise of Architecture" (*Trattato d'Architettura, Civile e Militare*), which has frequently come before us in the preceding pages, is Francesco di Giorgio's great bequest to the world, in which he sets forth, in text and drawings, the approved results of his life work in architecture, engineering and research; and either mentions directly, or suggests, his own original discoveries and inventions. A work of this importance obviously asked for a suitable dedication; and Francesco loses no time in telling us this in his Latin preface. After glancing briefly at ancient history, and mentioning such conquering princes as Alexander the Great and Julius Cæsar, who—he tells us—"had sometimes the architect Vitruvius in his camp, treating him with great kindness and familiarity (*benevolentia et familiaritate*)"—the analogy to the Duke and himself is already present—he continues: "I, however, when I had discovered many things most worthy of being handed down and unknown to others by my own genius (which I wish to be accepted as said without arrogance on my part) desired to find some Prince on whom I could bestow such a gift as this."¹

Fortunately, in his case, the choice was not difficult, the true and worthiest recipient near at hand. "Thou, indeed"—he here continues, addressing his beloved friend and patron, Federico, Duke of Urbino—"camest to my thought as by far to be preferred to any others whom I might have judged most worthy of these our labours. For what could be more befitting than to dedicate this work to thee, who by thy immortal deeds hast made

¹ In my account of the "Trattato" here I have consulted at Siena the edition of Promis, referring frequently to the original manuscripts preserved in the Biblioteca Comunale of Siena, the Magliabecchiana at Florence, and the Ducal Library at Turin. The date of the Siena "Codex" is revealed (v. Promis) by the perfection of the latest methods of fortification therein contained: it may be about 1500, and must be later than 1491, because it refers to the writer's journey to Naples in that year. The dedication "*Ad Inclytum Principem Federicum Urbinatam Ducem*" must have been earlier, and presented within the Duke's lifetime; this latter having died in 1482.

Italy illustrious, and in great works of military art and in founding glorious palaces" (we think here of Urbino and Gubbio) "and fortresses" (and here of San Leo, Fossombrone, Sasso Feretro) "hast ever constantly employed the work of architects?"¹

Let us come now to the "Trattato" itself, in which I shall use my notes made at Siena. The author is nothing if not practical; and, though in his prologue basing his reasoning upon Aristotle and his beloved Vitruvius, he at once proceeds to the statement: "I affirm that the art and science of architecture, of which according to the power of my weak abilities I here intend to treat in a sufficient manner, must be divided into seven principal parts."²

I. "The first book must determine all the principles and rules (*norme*) necessary and common to each one of the others, following here the opinion of Aristotle that from things universal we must proceed to things singular. After this that the first building that is necessary to man to construct is the house, or his own habitation."

II. "The second book must declare the *parts* that are sought for in the commodious house or palace, seeing that man is a social animal, nor can he live with comfort alone."

III. and IV. "The third book must shew the befitting *ornaments* of *castles* and *cities*; and because man, both naturally and through revelation, recognizes himself as a being made by the First Cause, Creator and End of all, to His own glory . . . he should build to Him *a temple*, of whose parts the fourth book must consider."

V. "And since it is necessary, in order to maintain Lordships and dominions, to make fortresses, by means of which the few can resist the greater number, and give

¹ "Tu profecto mihi longe caeteris antiferendus occurristi, quem nostris laboribus dignissimum judicarem. Quid enim convenientius fieri potuit quam tibi hoc opus dicere, qui immortalibus tuis rebus gestis Italiam illustrasti, et in magnis artis militaris operibus praestantibusque Palatiis et arcibus condendis architectorum opera utaris assidue?"

² On the margin of the MSS. is here written "Divisione del libro in sette trattati."

hurt to these, in the fifth book there are described various plans of fortresses (*rocche*) of new invention."

VI. "Besides, it being necessary to man to *transport* merchandise and fruits of the soil by sea from one place to another, where are the necessary harbours, in the sixth book are shewn the parts and forms of these."

VII. "Last of all, because in building it is necessary to move very great weights, for which the force of man without machinery (*ingegno*) is insufficient, in the seventh book are shewn various methods by which the above results may be acquired.¹ . . . And in these seven books it appears that all the material of this art is perfectly included."

We have now before us the general plan of this great work, and come at once to its details, of which I shall here give a summary—but not more than this. The reason for this treatment will become apparent to the reader as he advances into the present chapter, which would easily become out of all proportion to the rest of the book if I allowed myself to enter at all fully into such subjects as sites, materials, or even the question—interesting to our own day, but also treated carefully here—of town-planning. Even apart from this reasoning—in itself sufficient and decisive—there is another consideration which has influenced my decision. This is the hope that at some future day—perhaps not so very far away—this wonderful treatise, which represents the experience and expert judgment of a great Renaissance architect and engineer, may appear, in its complete text, in English, so as to be accessible both to the general public and to architects and builders in Britain, our great Dominions and the United States of America. When this is done—as I hope may be the case—it would add greatly to its practical value if it could appear edited not only by a trained, but actually a practising architect; because it is not only interesting to study here the XVth century Italian point of view of these fundamental problems of building and construction, but the book is so lucid, so

¹ "Ingegno" means here machine or engine. Cf. Schroeder (*op. cit.*) "Ingeniarius" (Italian—*Ingegnere*) was the man who invented and constructed *ingegni*, *engines*, *kriegsmaschinen*." Promis, however, remarks that Book VII is mainly occupied with the art of making mills.

thorough, so practical in its advice, so exact in its information, that I venture to believe that even now it might prove to be of some present assistance to the builder and architect.

Beginning with Book I, he first approaches the questions of sites (ch. II) and of the great importance in their selection, of avoiding bad conditions (*dello sfuggire siti cattivi*) for building; then goes on to speak (ch. III) of water supply, of the atmospheric conditions in (ch. IV), air and (ch. V) winds, and then of materials for construction. Chapter VI is devoted to the question of marbles and stones for use in building; and he here goes carefully into the marble supplies then available, mentioning specially "the marble of Luni, commonly called Carràrese" (of Carrara—whose quarries of white marble, then worked, are still in use), of porphyry, serpentine (found, he says, in Egypt and near Volterra), of "tiburtina" (from near Siena) and others. Next (ch. VII) he comes to bricks (ch. VIII), chalks (ch. IX), sand and (ch. X) woods for building (*i legni*); and now, in the next book, we are ready to approach the actual house itself.

In this Book II, after treating the question of position for the house in relation to climate and winds, he takes first its exterior, talking about (ch. II) windows and staircases, and then (ch. III) chimneys—for which he gives some quaint and interesting designs of chimney pots and cowls (some of which I copied and have before me now), obviously intended to meet the problem of smoke from down draught; then he goes on to speak (ch. IV) of closets and lavatories (*dei necessari*), of cellars for wine and store-houses for oil, and (ch. VI) of stables. Here Francesco takes occasion to describe "the stables which I have built for my most illustrious Duke of Urbino, from which there can be understood all the parts that a complete and perfect stable ought to possess." The stables there planned could accommodate three hundred horses, one hundred and fifty on each side. Above they should have a fine vault to hold hay and straw, with square holes arranged. There were placed rooms around, the first a hall for riding, then accommodation for shoeing and grooming the horses; and, accessible to these, a fountain with two drinking troughs. The noble stables here described—

begun in 1482 and considered the finest in Italy—were, unfortunately, destroyed in 1587. Still dealing with the house and its outbuildings, the writer describes (ch. VII) granaries, then goes on to the interior, the proportions of different rooms, and to roofs and gardens. He comes next to the important subject of palaces—(ch. X) public and (ch. XI) private; lastly with (ch. XII) pavements and (ch. XIII) methods of finding water this Book II concludes.

It is interesting to notice here what Francesco has to say on the design and construction of palaces—a subject on which he was fully qualified to speak; and here, in the Italy of his day, there were still two main divisions of public palaces, those of the Republic or Commune and those of a reigning Prince. That of a Republic should, in his view, face on the principal square (*piazza principale*) of the city, and have one free entrance, leading to an inner courtyard; and the city—besides this Palace of the Signory, with its spacious loggia and portico, and the private palaces of citizens—must also be provided with other and lesser “piazze” and “piazzette,” besides a market place (*foro di mercato*) with arcades, with a cathedral and parish churches, with public offices, prison and custom house (*dogana*)—all situated near the principal piazza. This provision, as to the Palace of the Signory being provided with one free entrance, is very significant of the conditions of political life then prevailing in these Italian Republics. When the “out” party, whether malcontents or exiles (*fuor-usciti*), wanted to upset the existing government, their first move was obviously to seize the Public Palace; once firmly planted there inside, this brain and heart of the State was theirs, they could ring the great bell of its tower, summon their adherents, issue their orders, establish their supremacy. Hence the importance of having one carefully guarded entrance; and, in fact, the Pazzi conspirators at Florence failed precisely because, though—on the excuse of a message from Rome for the Gonfaloniere Petrucci—they had got through the outer door of the Palace of the Signory at Florence, they found themselves blocked within by a catch on the inner door, contrived specially as a precaution against such treason; and, thus trapped inside, met with the terrible and

traditional fate of conspirators in being hurled alive from the Palace windows into the square beneath.¹

The same precaution was probably even more necessary in the palace of a reigning Prince or despot, who, at this period in Italy, generally lived haunted by the fear of possible treason or murder. Francesco here describes a certain contrivance (*strumento*) of his invention—a cavity, like a walled-in window (*finestra murata*) set in the thickness of the wall—by which the Lord could hear all that went on in his Court while he himself was not present; an ingenious device, which recalls the legend of the famous Ear of Dionysius, but seems more suited to a Sicilian tyrant, or to the Castello of the Visconti or Sforza of Milan, than to the freer and cleaner atmosphere of the Court of Urbino.²

In Book II we come to first a careful treatment of what we now call town planning (*economia generale e perimetri della Citta*), on which we have already touched in speaking of the Public Palace and principal buildings of an Italian Republic; and then (ch. II) to a subject perhaps less significant to us, but in which he was evidently deeply interested. This was the proportion of columns and their capitals (ch. III and IV) in the three orders, Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian, and of their other parts, their bases and trabeation; and, lastly (ch. VII), their analogy with the proportions of the human body. This theory, derived from their study of Vitruvius, had taken hold of the Italian writers on architecture of this time and fascinated their imagination. They are all attracted by it, from Filarete³ and Luca Pacioli to our author here; and I should

¹ V. my "Golden Age of the Medici," ch. VII, "The Conspiracy of the Pazzi," where I describe in detail the failure of this attempt to seize the Palace.

² Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, made a subterranean cave, in the form of a human ear, whence sounds, directed to one common "tympanum," were carried to the room where the tyrant himself was listening.

³ "Antonio Filarete or Averulino, architect and sculptor, was author"—says Symonds—"of a treatise on the building of the ideal city, one of the most curious specimens of Renaissance fancy." The Medicean copy of this work, "*tutta storiata di figure di sua mano*" (V. Vasari II, 457), is preserved in the Biblioteca Magliabecchiana at Florence.



by no means be disposed to dismiss this idea, like some writers of the last century, as the chimera of a vain imagination.¹ In any case, even if it will not hold as a rule of architectural structure (and we shall see that even Francesco owns its difficulties), it does express very wonderfully in actual form the idea which lay behind the whole Renaissance culture—that of the dignity and supremacy of man, the splendid possibilities of development which lay before him. Perhaps they went too far in advancing the Vitruvian claim—that no architectural design could be complete or satisfying “unless it held the exact proportions of the limbs of a well-formed human being” (*nisi uti ad hominis bene figurati membrorum habuerit exactam rationem*); but the claim itself is in the spirit of that wonderful age, and is full of inspiring suggestion.

Francesco works the subject out in detail, using the head in different parts of the capital or cornice, the rest of the body below the shoulders being the column itself—“the which proportions,” he suggests, “in the antique works are found to be corresponding”; and he devoted to this theory several of his most beautiful drawings in the “Trattato,” some of which—copied by me from the Magliabecchiana “Codex”—I have now before me. The Doric column contains the upright nude figure, in profile, marked to scale, of a man, the Ionic that of a woman similarly treated, and again, in front view, of a beautiful young girl; elsewhere he has many outlines, finely drawn, of the columns and capitals themselves, or we find the head itself adapted to an Ionic capital, or the male figure as forming the base for the design of a circular building.²

To the exposition of these and other figures, and of his ideas on this subject Francesco has devoted pages of his text, which I do not propose to inflict on my readers, because he was evidently trying to work out a canon of art which could not always hold, and failed in every case to even satisfy himself. In fact, in this very chapter (VII)

¹ Cf. Promis, *op. cit.* “The chimære of finding the parts and proportions of architecture in those of the human figure arose in the XVth and XVIth centuries from the misreading (*poco saggia lettura*) of Vitruvius.”

² Francesco here mentions two beautiful examples of these proportions found by him “in a ruined temple at Veios or Civita Castellana.”

he has to admit that "sometimes seeking in my imagination and research if the proportion (*propositione (sic)*) of the cornice could be reduced to that of the head of a man, and measuring with that object several kinds of cornices, I have seen that in many cases it is impossible, although great similarity is to be found."

Here we see that Martini, with his thoroughly practical outlook, his dislike of mere theory in art, was able—like his great contemporary Leo Battista Alberti—to keep himself from being committed too far to this most attractive but untenable theory; in which both Filarete and Fra Luca Pacioli—in his work on the "Divina Proporzione," printed at Venice in 1509—had become far too deeply engulfed.¹

In Book IV, which is devoted to religious buildings, the author introduces his subject by a learned prologue in which he quotes Cicero (in his "Tusculans"), Plato ("Timæus"), Aristotle and St. Augustine ("The City of God," Lib. XI) on the immortality of the soul and the need therefrom of man to recognize and praise "the Maker of all things and Lord of all." As in the subject just treated, so here, too, I am by no means disposed to pass over these utterances as mere literary verbiage. At the Court of Urbino, under its great Duke—himself a scholar and a man of religious feeling, as well as the finest soldier of his time—Francesco may have very probably come into touch with that movement towards the union of philosophy with Christian teaching which centred at Florence in the studies of Marsilio Ficino and the scholars of the Medicean circle, and finds—as we have seen—a later expression in Messer Bembo's praise of heavenly beauty in the pages of the "Cortegiano." That such scholars as Marsilio or Pico della Mirandola were sincere in their dream of harmonizing the recovered knowledge of the mighty past with the great tradition of the Church, the Christian with Classic thought, there can be no doubt.² Nor is it likely that their teaching should not have found an echo in this cultured Court of Urbino, whose Duke had himself been a scholar at Mantua of the great Humanist Vittorino da

¹ Cf. Rocchi, Vol. III, *op. cit.*, page 25.

² V. my "Golden Age of the Medici," conclusion of ch. IX.

Feltre. From this point of view, in the sense of man's dignity, his divine birthright, I take Francesco seriously when, in his prologue, he tells us that, "Man, touching things inanimate, in his nourishment and growth has affinity with plants, in his feelings with the brute beasts, and lastly in his reason and intellect with the world of spirit; so that the Greeks came to call him a Mikrokosmos, that is in himself a little world."

Coming now closer to his subject our author treats first the external and then (ch. II) internal parts of temples and churches, using here two figures of different proportions, the first circular, composed of lines based on the round, the second oblong, "that is to say a non-equilateral square," while the third, a combination of these two, results from their description. We have already seen Martini's interest in and close study of circular buildings, and shall not be surprised to find him here referring to those studies of the Pantheon (S. M. Rotonda—"as I have seen it"), the Temple of Bacchus (? S. Costanza—"without Rome"), which we have seen (ch. III) in his drawings; as well as to Avernus near Naples—which last dates this part of the "Trattato" as after 1491. Then follows the proportion of temples—bringing us back to his favourite theory of their relation with those of the human body; which here, at least, in the cruciform design of nave and transept, seems to find one form of expression. He now proceeds to doors and windows, of which he has some beautiful drawings—very interesting to compare with those introduced into the architectural background of his "Flagellation" at Perugia, and other sculptured reliefs; then treats the nave, chapels and vaults, and lastly (ch. VIII) the general appearance (*aspetto*) of the church, with such additions as the bell tower (*campanile*) and such ornaments as the great candelabra, which are also mentioned specially by Filarete and Leo Battista Alberti.

We now, in Book V, have reached what is perhaps the most important part of the whole work; as treating material which is both original and has had most important and lasting results. In his prologue upon the need of military defence—which is here his subject—Francesco again goes back to the ancient writers in laying down the axiom that "the prince should not only be adorned by just laws, but

supported by arms, in order that on every occasion, in war and peace, he may be able to administer justice, as stated in the beginning of the Institutes, and to guard himself against powerful enemies."¹ The "Istituto" here referred to is the famous text-book of Roman Law known to every law student, the Institutes of Gaius; and the prince he has specially in view is his own great patron, Federigo of Urbino, to whom he refers more directly a little later. For, after giving us a list (v. ch. V) of the guns then in use, and some advice as to powder in war and how to take care of it, he tells us that the difficulty of opposing these new weapons of attack was such as "my own efforts might have failed to meet" (*i.e.* in finding a means of resistance to the new artillery fire) "if there had not come to my aid and help my most Illustrious Lord Federigo, Duke of Urbino, whose prudence and incredible wisdom took away from my thought every fear and doubt which the difficulty of the material might have caused me."

In this case the courtly praises of his Duke—"in the field of battle a Mars, in his government a Minerva, abounding in that manly worth (*virtù*) and sound judgment, which Aristotle writes to Alexander are becoming to a prince"—are justified by history²; and coming now to grips with his difficult subject he here lays down the axiom—to which I have referred (ch. V)—that "the goodness of a fortress consists as much in its planning as in the thickness of its walls." Having been over this ground already I shall here refer the reader to the preceding chapter (V) in which he will remember that Martini, faced by this problem of the new artillery fire, had at length hit upon a defence against bombards, limited as to expense of time and money, and convenient in material,—called by him *Capannato*. Capanna means a hut—a term known by every bather on the Lido or Italian coast—and this apparently simple invention of the *Capannato*, "in the shape of a hut" (*in forma di capanna*), was, as I hope to show here,

¹ Institutionum Gaii Commentarius. Tit. I. "Justitia constans et perpetua voluntas jus suum cuique tribuendi."

² He quotes this last in Latin—"regalius est animum sententiis habere abundantem quam habitum corporis bene inductum." These praises of Duke Federigo are echoed by two great Humanists of the time—Poggio in his "History of Florence," and Filelfo in his Letters.

to initiate the whole modern system of defence against artillery fire, and to justify Colonel Schroeder—a leading German expert on this very subject—in declaring (*v. ch. V*) that it was Martini who first grasped the nature of the bastion and brought it to perfection; and that it was “he and no other, without any rival (*ohne konkurrenz*),” who is, in the work now before us, “the only source which helps us to a clear understanding of the transition period from the old to the new methods of fortification.”¹

This matter is so important that to have any hope of grasping it we must go—as does the author just quoted—back to its first elements, in any case as far as the Romans; and we shall find the first feature of the Roman fortification as the ditch (*fossa*), the natural and easiest method of defence, while the earth thus dug out formed itself into a protecting mound (*agger*); and to this became added, to increase its height, the palisade or stockade (*vallum*). We have come by this time very near to the wall itself (*murus*), with its battlements (the Italian *merlo* is itself from a diminutive of *murus*), and the double wall (*antemurale*) is to come later; and it was an obvious advantage to raise towers to overlook the walls and flank an attacking enemy, while the great watchtower (*belfredo*, *beffroi*) rose to dominate the country around.

Here at length the mediæval fortress, with its battlements, its massive keep, its dungeons stands before us, secure against attack, almost impregnable, until the use of powder and firearms came to alter the whole position; but in the meantime, even against this fortress, the ingenuity of man had devised a new element of attack, which itself is almost an innovation. The word casemate is a well-known term in building, but from the XIIth to the XIIIth centuries it comes to have a special and technical significance: in its Italian derivation (*casa matta*, a house gone mad) it already prepares us for something singular, eccentric, out of the common. And these *casamatte* (German, *sturm-hutten*) formed, among

¹ V. Schroeder: *Archiv. für Artillerie und Ingenieur Offizieren*, 1891. “Martini und die bastionierte Front.” This author adds here: “Leonardo da Vinci has indeed left us some contributions on this subject, but their text is very insufficient; in the knowledge and insight of fortifications he does not go as far as Martini.”

the older machines of war, a recognized method of approach to the walls for a storming party; they were used by the Venetian fleets in sea warfare, and on land by Frederick Barbarossa (A.D. 1159) in his famous siege of Crema, as well as later by the French under the names of "boulevard" or "moineau." Francesco knew all about them, for some of his drawings translated into the reliefs within the Palace of Urbino actually depict this shelter, raised aloft and moved forward to the height of the walls themselves; and elsewhere he calls them, like his new invention, "capannati" or "the old casemates" (*casematte antiche*).

But Martini was the first to realize and develop their possibilities, not as an improvisation, an *accessory* of attack, but as a *part of the actual defence* of the fortress. He did not abandon the fortress, and indeed (as Colonel Schroeder points out) the embattled walls and tower remain as the chief feature (*haupt element*) of his fortification; but his towers become round, not four square, and set—as jewels in a ring—around the walls, while the great central tower (*torrione*), the citadel itself, stands back to dominate the whole.

Then to the older fortress—soon to be shaken by the guns of Charles VIII of France in his spectacular march (1494) through Italy—Francesco comes to add this strengthening feature of his new invention, and he describes it very precisely and clearly in the passage (Lib. V, ch. 7) to which I have alluded. "Because there is not in every place commodity to make the ditches deep and the towers and walls thick, I have imagined a defence against bombards . . . in the form of a hut, which I call *capannato*"; and he then explains to us exactly where and how it is to be constructed. "At the bottom of the ditch (*fossa*), where the bombards, cross-bows, and other weapons of the enemy cannot reach, there must be made a room (*stanza*) of thick walls with the offensives" (*offese*) (i.e. guns and slits for shooting out) "set within all around, its diameter twelve to fourteen feet, its height eight feet, and so arranged that the cross bowmen and bombardiers can work shoulder to shoulder without getting in each other's way." Then follow directions as to communication by a narrow and underground passage, with a drawbridge, to the Rocca (Citadel) itself; also a

door, which must be very strongly guarded and secured, leading to the wall of the fortress without.

Martini attached (as we shall see at the end of this chapter) the greatest possible value to drawings for illustrating his meaning; and nowhere are they more useful and necessary than here. He gives us no less than five separate drawings of these *capannati*; but perhaps the most important and instructive is the sixth, which shows this new feature of defence attached to an outer tower, and set within the ditch or moat itself, being thus invisible to an attacking force from without. In this way it cannot be reached by gunfire, because it is sheltered by the outside wall which is built to slant off against the fire of projectiles; but if the enemy once got over this wall into the space within, guarded by the *capannato*, with its tower and second wall behind, they would be exposed to a murderous fire from within the *capannato* and from the tower above; and unless they can either rush the *capannato* or climb back over a steep wall (neither of which seems likely) they are all dead men—for not one of them could ever escape alive. This at least is my humble opinion (and I am no expert), after carefully studying this drawing; but Francesco does not stop here, he develops his invention, sets (fig. VII) his *capannato* on the top of the great tower or below, or again in a most formidable circle at the angles around.¹

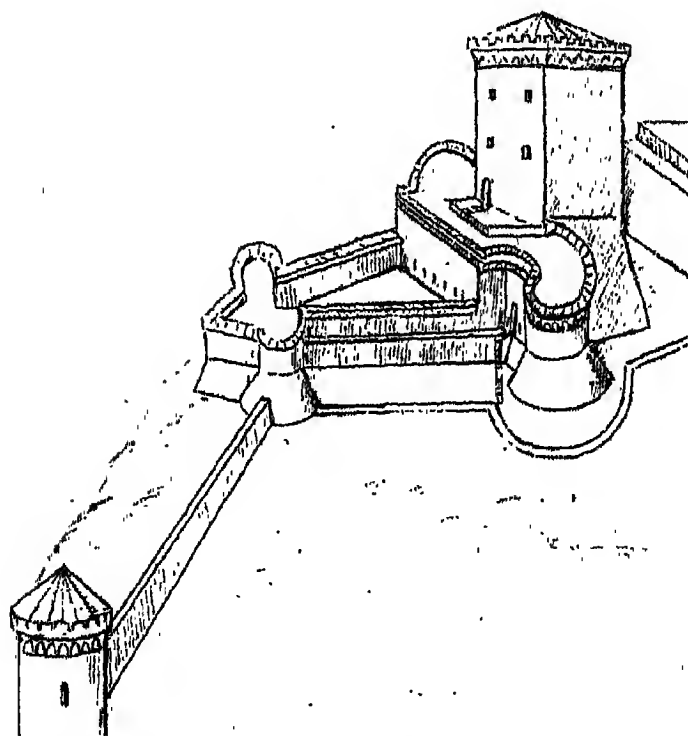
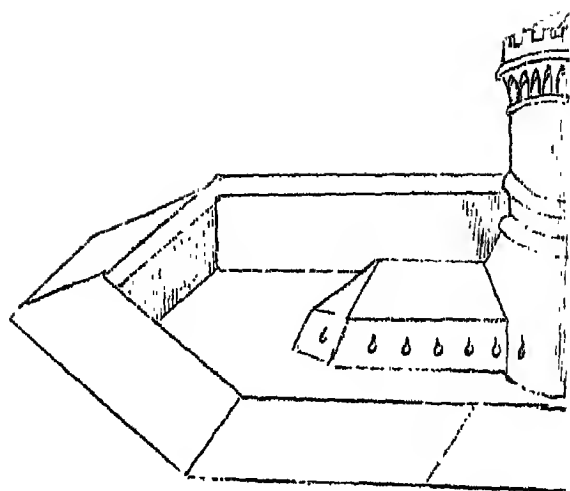
This is only the beginning, very quickly to develop in his fertile brain into new and more complex forms; but here—I venture to suggest—the whole question of modern defence against gunfire from a distance takes its starting-point. I do not propose to follow him into detail, because this would amount to a discussion on an interesting but most difficult and technical subject, which is not a part of the work before me here; but I shall allude very briefly to two forms of defence, both—as I take it—developments of the *capannato* carried into the more complex plan of a great fortress. Martini seems to have attached great importance to side and cross-fire, and hence his fortress comes to assume the forms of a star (*le forme stellate*) or the jagged teeth of a saw (German, *säge-form*); but he

¹ V. sketch plan of “capannato” in my plates here given.

now introduces two new and most important features, the *puntone* (the point of a sword, German *punkt*), as the end of a line of defence thrust out for this very purpose of flanking fire, while the *gola* (French, *gorge*) is its throat, as being the covered channel of communication between this sword-point and the central citadel. Both *puntone* and *gola* appear very clearly defined in the great fortress of Sasso Feretro, which Colonel Schroeder takes as the typical example of the type of fortress designed by Martini for his Duke; and the German expert exclaims here—“*Puntone and gola!* Have we not here in complete form (*fix und fertig*) the modern Italian bastion with its flanking supports (*Flanken und Ohren*)?” He even sees in this form of bastion the motive which enabled the French engineer, Erard Bar-le-Duc, to give such an impulse to this element of the flanking position: but to grasp better this question let us here study the fortress itself of Sasso Feretro, first glancing, however, at a wonderful and almost freehand drawing by Francesco of a fortress, whose main entrance is guarded by what is called a *rivellino* of this same *puntone* character, with grand flanking bastions such as the French designer made use of later.¹

The fortress-citadel of Sasso Feretro (Plate XVII, 2 of Promis) was a great polygon (? six-sided) connected by its covered gallery (*gola*) with the *puntone*, which runs like a sharp sword-point, guarded on either side by two great shoulder bastions, so that the *puntone* may be called the middle bastion of these. This principal tower (*haupt-thurm*) to which the *gola* runs direct, with its own cistern for water supply and prison, is really a small fortress of its own, where the Governor (Castellano) could shut himself up, secure against treason, with his most trusted followers; and Francesco plans most carefully for its defence, guarding it, he tells us, with a bridge and double staircase and portcullis (*saracinesca*) which the Castellano can draw up at his will—“this principal tower of the Castellano being so strong and high that it

¹ Schroeder tells us that when he first saw this drawing by Francesco, without knowing its author, it was the name of Bar-le-Duc that at once sprang to his mind.



*Drawing by
F. di Giorgio]*

26 CAPANNATO; and
ROCCA DI CAGLI.

[DUCAL LIBRARY
OF TURIN.

can dominate the rest of the fortress, so that it remains lord of the others without being exposed itself."

The great Rocca of Cagli, which was taken by treachery from Duke Guidobaldo by Cæsar Borgia, and besieged again by Lorenzo de' Medici in 1517, and is described by Guicciardini in his History (Lib. XIII, ch. I) as of very great strength, had been set by Martini, as he tells us, "upon a mountain overlooking the neighbouring city, and three hundred feet above it." Here he built his citadel (*torre principale*), with its enclosing walls so placed that they could defy the fire of bombards; and beyond them he threw out a wonderful *gola* leading far below to a great bastion or *puntone*, which could thrust its sword-point down the hillside against the enemy. In fact, he keeps on changing and developing these elements of defence, and it is possible that he had not realized all the possibilities of his own invention; and that, in our own time, as his German critic suggests, "however near we may be to the bastion design (*Bastion-gestalt*) Martini comes yet nearer, and perhaps we may be even now behind what his thought had attained."¹ But when Vasari praises "the most fair and strong bastion," made by the architect Sanmichele at Verona, and called "of the Magdalen," we must remember that—as justly pointed out by Promis and supported by Milanese in his note on Vasari's Lives—the famous Veronese architect and engineer was working on the material brought into being, fully twenty-seven years earlier, by his no less great Siense predecessor, Martini.²

In my account of the Trattato here, I have devoted special attention to this side of its author's researches, included under Military Defence in Book V, because of their exceptional importance; but there are other drawings of great interest, connected more directly with the subject

¹ Cf. Schroeder, *op. cit.* His criticism is of first importance.

² Cf. Vasari, *op. cit.*, Vol. VI, 343. Life of Sanmichele. Milanese says here: "It was said that the bastion called 'della Maddalena' was the first in this kind of fortification seen in Italy; but Promis, in his Memoria IV on the 'Trattato' of Francesco di Giorgio Martini, architect and engineer of the XVth century, upholds the view that the first record of bastions appears in the drawings of the Siense engineer, who had invented several forms of these about 1500." V. sketch plan of Rocca de Cagli in my plates with *gola* and *puntone*.

of attack, which I cannot pass over entirely. One of these, among his drawings of bombards, I found to represent a kind of "mitrailleuse" or chambered gun, in its rudimentary form; and another—to which I have already alluded, and have my sketch made in the Magliabecchiana here before me—among the drawings treating of castles and methods of their attack by bombards and "colubrine," is one which I have called, in my own notes, "perhaps the most astonishing thing in this whole series of drawings, and which I should suggest as foreshadowing the tank of the Great War." This represents a boat-shaped vehicle, moving on cog wheels and obviously intended for attack; while that in the stone reliefs of the Palace of Urbino, though the same idea, is somewhat different in treatment and rather in the form of a chariot, fitted with guns in front arranged in tiers. Francesco di Giorgio's discoveries on the use of mines in war are most important, but are reserved by me for discussion in a later chapter, for reasons which the reader will find convincing; I may, however, mention here that he had a very complete idea of diving equipment, as he shows in his drawings in the Ducal Library of Turin, where the diver, a male nude figure, has a proper helmet with its attachments and is seen at work under the water, with beside him another figure on the surface, equipped with a kind of lifebelt. In his Book VI he treats the arrangement of harbours and their defence with the best methods of laying foundations in the water; and Book VII is on the moving of weights—illustrated with many fine drawings of pulleys and machinery—on the carrying of water in quantity to a distance, and on the construction of mills.

Francesco di Giorgio was fully aware of the value, both to mankind and his own reputation, of his original inventions here described and illustrated; and of the danger he ran (copyright and patent law not having been then invented) of their being pirated without any sort of acknowledgment. In fact, he says in this last book, referring to his machines and instruments, that "it does not seem advisable to me to show them forth with facilities to all, since when they have once come to light the invention itself is annulled, its development being comparatively a small matter (*piccola cosa*). But even this," he goes on to

dimora a oliviera hantipiane tu
 n te stessa sercor manta hup actor uia
 possate nelessi piglii due hotei chelleghe
 y istema chelpute danieliello hio altim
 enty danielio stansay chonemnie hie
 chellegie intorno alhupio tuo lachande
 miedura spagola imano lachapfendu
 So pigliando elhamino due hie piace
 pueri di potey &

el lachapfendu danielio lachap
 finta ho mueru in de hoiad
 orca uellessi piglii habbini ho helme fuc
 ero studiolo chondue hantj diueto cinto
 allencentor sua diueto cinto lachato d
 aume mactandesi quelle macta chon



Drawing by
 F. di Giorgio

say, "is a less evil than the fact that ignorant persons make use of the labours of others, usurping the glory of an invention which is not their own"; and he then tells us he could mention the names of some of these offenders "were it not that my words would be received with resentment (*con passione*), owing to the natural enmity which exists between my fellow citizens and themselves (*per la naturale inimicizia che e fra li concivi miei e quelli*)."¹ We have seen (ch. I) the intense jealousy which existed between Siena and her ancient enemy and rival Florence, and which had flamed up into actual war in Francesco's own time; and "these words," says Promis, very justly, "can only refer to some Florentine engineer by whom Francesco di Giorgio considered himself robbed of his inventions." Who could this be?

Not certainly, we may conclude, either Leo Battista Alberti or Filarete; nor yet surely the divine Leonardo, whose soaring genius would have despised such a baseness, and who was later to meet Francesco on terms of friendship and mutual appreciation. Promis, however, does suggest that Fra Luca Paciolo—to whose work on the "*Divina Proporzione*" I have recently referred—had the reputation of being a plagiarist; and mentions, even more directly, the names of Bernardo Rossellino of Florence, who designed for Pius II that wonderful early Renaissance city of Pienza (some of whose buildings have been attributed to Martini himself²) and Giuliano di San Gallo, the famous Florentine architect and engineer, who built for Pope Clement VII his beautiful Roman villa, later to be known as the Villa Madama.³ Vasari (*op. cit.*, IV, 267–291) gives Giuliano's life and work as architect and military engineer in detail immediately before that of Raphael.

It is a responsibility which I should not care to assume, without absolute proof, to make such a charge as that of

¹ Promis himself disputes this attribution; and says that these buildings at Pienza are not by Francesco, but by Bernardo Fiorentino. In fact, Pius II declares in his own Commentaries that the architect of the buildings of Pienza was Bernardo Fiorentino: this was probably B. Rossellino, but may have been a Bernardo di Lorenzo of Florence, who worked for Nicholas V at Rome.

² Cf. W. H. Greenwood's fine volume, recently published, "*Villa Madama, Rome. A Reconstruction.*" This writer says "the Villa Madama, designed by Raphael and built by San Gallo."

plagiarism—most of all against a dead man, who cannot defend himself. But I may recall here to my reader that we found Giuliano, in actual warfare in Tuscany, opposed to Francesco at Castellina as the military engineer of Lorenzo de' Medici, "to whom," says Vasari, "he had offered himself, when still busied with his drawing and with the hot blood of youth in his veins; and when the Magnificent Lorenzo needed an engineer in Castellina who should make defences and bastions and handle his artillery, which few at that time knew how to do."

We have seen that Francesco, though himself a writer on art, had little sympathy with mere talk; and in difficult material (his *capannato* is an instance) turns frequently from the description to the actual drawing to make clear his meaning. He was himself a finished and beautiful draughtsman, and some of his figures in the "Trattato"—the nude male figure (? Hercules) wearing a lion's skin (facing page 28 of the Magliabecchiana Codex) being a characteristic example—are little gems of fine drawing; nor could I find any happier ending to this chapter than to quote his own remarks on the value and necessity of practice in drawing. It is often difficult for some of us—and in that busy life of Courts and camps it may have been not less so to him—to find time for that art expression which may be a craving of our very nature; but I may be permitted to repeat here the advice of John Ruskin, himself a finished draughtsman—which I have myself found of the greatest possible help—to "always keep the pencil going." By so doing, whatever our other work and its pressing claims, we still keep the eye trained, the sense of form before us; and to his reader Francesco addresses in conclusion these words, as the ripe result of his experience, with yet again—but not surely too often—his expression of faith, deep and sincere, in the great Builder, without whose quickening Spirit all our thoughts and works are in vain.

"Let those who from this work of mine desire to attain good results apply their best efforts to have some knowledge of drawing (*disegno*), because without this they cannot understand the composition and the architectural part, for the reason that the external surfaces (*superficie*) cover the internal, and of every part it would

be too long to give example; and because the complete architect makes use of his invention in many cases which are not described, and which without drawing it is impossible to arrive at; and, lastly, when he wishes to construct a building, he cannot without drawing express and declare his own conception." But, he then concludes, following this rule, "it will not be difficult for the reader, with the few principles here described, to come to the knowledge of true conclusions, and to carry them out into sound and reasoned work with the aid of the Maker of all, from whose gift come all our powers."

In this concluding Chapter we have had to traverse some difficult ground, but which will well repay our study; and was, in any case, necessary to the subject. It would be quite possible to write an attractive art work on Francesco di Giorgio, as painter, sculptor and architect: but such a treatment would be incomplete, would not include the whole man. When I mentioned lately to my friend Prof. Fiocco of the University of Padua that I was writing upon this Master he said at once—"You are treating the father of fortification (*il padre della fortificazione*)"; and if this side of his achievement is known only to the few, to the studious, it cannot be overlooked. I do, however, believe that in this Chapter (and it has been no easy task) I have got a clear hold of his answer to the problem (V. Ch. V.)—new to himself and to his age—of defence against artillery fire; and that the reader, using my illustrations along with the text, will be able to follow me.

We have seen that the Master fully recognized both the importance of his own invention of the "capannato," the first germ of the later bastion, and that he might be—perhaps was already—robbed of the fruit of his genius and research; and later ages have only too fully confirmed that anticipation. If these pages do something to bring that fact to light they will not have been written in vain; and I venture to hope that they may even attract the attention of those interested in military science, because, though modern conditions may be very different, these sparks of genius do often light some train of fresh discovery, and the "capannato," "gola" and "puntone" still have something to say to us.

In the volume (Part II) which is to follow I shall be treating quite another side of my subject. We have here seen Francesco Martini as painter, engineer, writer on architecture. We shall next study him as a practising architect, creating a new and delightful architecture, as fresh in feeling, as pure in form as that of Alberti, Brunelleschi or Laurana, and drawn, like theirs, from the message of the antique. We shall see him too as sculptor—a side of his creation which has been only quite recently recognized, though Vasari in his *Life* of this Master had told us long ago that, while giving his attention to painting, it was not like his sculpture (*non simili alle sculture*); and yet later, when the torrent of war poured down over the Alps, we shall find him, much against his own desire, drawn back by the Princes of Italy into the application of his military science—a rich harvest yet awaiting us, to which the present volume is the clue and prelude.

FRANCESCO DI GIORGIO MARTINI OF SIENA

LIST OF PAINTINGS

SIENA—Gallery.¹

Coronation of the Virgin. (v. ch. II.)

Nativity (from Monte Oliveto a Porta Tufi. (v. ch. II.)

Virgin and Child with Angel. (v. ch. II.)

Virgin and Child with ss. Peter and Paul. (v. ch. II.)

Three Panels of Old Testament Story—

1. *Susanna and the Elder.*

2. *Joseph sold by his Brethren.*

3. *Joseph who escapes from Potiphar's wife.*

The Virgin Annunciate (v. ch. II.) *with s. Gabriel.*
(London Exhib. 1930.)

Virgin and Child with 2 male ss. (v. ch. II.)

Altarpiece of the Passion. (v. ch. II.)

Virgin Annunciate (fragment of an *Annunciation*;
v. ch. II.)

SIENA—City.

Arciconfraternità della Santissima. *Virgin and Child with 2 ss.* (? F. di G: not characteristic).

Nativity. (In S. Domenico: last chapel to R. under lunette probably by Matteo di Giovanni. v. ch. II.)

S. Bernardino preaching (has been given to Neroccio: I prefer Vecchietta).

Miracle of S. Bernardino. (Both these panels in *Palazzo Pubblico of Siena*: v. criticism in ch. II., p. 31.) They connect themselves with the panel of

LIVERPOOL GALLERY. *Preaching of s. Bernardino* (v. ch. II.); and that of

(¹) This Siena Gallery I found last year newly and nobly housed in Palazzo Buonsignori; with many fine primitives added. When these paintings are mentioned in the book I refer to the chapter, and in other cases often add some descriptive note. Beyond this I do not necessarily guarantee the attribution.

FULLER MAITLAND Collection : *ss. Peter and John healing lame man* (exhibited at Manchester; v. ch. II.); as well as

MUNICH PINACOTHEK. *Miracle of s. Anthony of Padua* (v. ch. II. for my criticism of this interesting group of five panels, as well as of the three panels, now under Neroccio).

UFFIZI GALLERY, FLORENCE, treating the *Story of s. Benedict* (which I myself would give to Francesco di Giorgio).

LONDON. NATIONAL GALLERY. *s. Dorothy leading the heavenly Child.*

RICHMOND. Sir Herbert Cook's Collection at Doughty House. *Nativity.* (v. ch. II.)

SOUTHWICK (Sussex). Mr. Selwyn Brinton's Coll. *Virgin and Child* (panel, on gold ground).

ROME. Count Castelli-Mignatelli's Coll. *Virgin who offers her breast to baby Jesus.*

U.S. AMERICA—

(Some interesting paintings by Martini have found their way into American collections : among these I here include)—

D. F. PLATT Coll. (Englewood, New Jersey). *Virgin and Child with two Angels ; the Child dressed.* (v. ch. II. From Monastero, near Siena.) Virgin has great charm; reproduced in "Pitture Italiane in America."

LEHMANN Coll., New York. *God the Father among Angels.* The angels very characteristic and beautiful. Reproduced by Lionello Venturi in his "Pitture Italiane in America." This critic there adds : "In spite of affinities with Neroccio this painting must be attributed to Francesco di Giorgio."

C. H. HOLMES Coll., Boston, U.S.A. *Virgin and Child with Saints and Angels.*

BLUMENTHAL (George and Florence) Coll., New York. *Nativity*. (This came from Benson Coll., London. In composition and treatment similar to the same subject in Sir. H. Cook's Richmond Coll.) ⁽¹⁾

JARVES Coll., New York. *Annunciation*. (Here the type may suggest Neroccio, but architectural treatment of background the hand of Francesco di Giorgio.)

P. J. SACHS Coll., U.S.A. *Virgin and Child*. (I might question this; but it has great charm.)

MRS. S. R. GUGGENHEIM Coll., U.S.A. *Virgin and Child with Saints*. (Attributed to Francesco di Giorgio.)

MAITLAND FULLER GRIGGS Coll., New York. *The Game of Chess*. Numerous figures of men and girls, with fair hair like wigs. (L. Venturi calls this a panel, broad and free in treatment, of the late period of Francesco di Giorgio, when he sought in fanciful subjects a relaxation from his important architectural and military duties. Mason Perkins has noted in a private collection of New York a painting, which may be a pendant to this, of a lady at a window with two men: both works might be decorations for furniture).

This last-mentioned may lead us on to a very interesting series of subjects by the Master, taken from Allegory or History, commencing with

BOOK-COVERS (GABELLE) for the Biccherna of Siena in the Archivio of that city. (*v.* ch. II.)

1460. Pius II. making his nephew a Cardinal.

1467. Madonna protecting Siena in time of earthquakes.

1479. The Sienese and their Allies encamped in Val d'Elsa.

⁽¹⁾ Note that Mr. A. McComb (Art Studies, 1924) suggests this work as having been painted under the influence of Girolamo da Cremona, a Squarcionesque miniaturist who visited Southern Tuscany between 1467-75, just the very period of Francesco's partnership with Neroccio. The influence of this Girolamo has been also traced in the "Miracle and Story of s. Benedict" in the Uffizi Gallery. I may return to him later in connection with the drawings of the Master.

1480. Madonna commends her city of Siena to Christ.

1483. Madonna receives the keys of the city from the Prior.

CASSONE PANELS. There are several panels for "cassone" fronts attributed to Francesco di Giorgio; often treating of "Triumphs" (*Trionfi*). *e.g.*

SIR H. COOK's Coll., Richmond. *Triumph of Chastity*. (v. ch. II.)

LADY WANTAGE Coll. The same subject. (v. ch. II.)

VISCOUNT LASCELLES Coll. The same subject; shewing a fair-haired girl seated on car drawn by unicorns, and holding captive baby-loves, while other maidens follow.

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, New York, U.S.A. *A Triumph of Beatrice*. Girl seated in car drawn by griffins; a group of fair-haired maidens follow. Mr. McComb suggests this as belonging to a larger panel dealing with story of Diana and Actaeon.

E. L. WHEELWRIGHT Coll., U.S.A. (Boston). Panel with subjects of *Judgment of Paris* and *Rape of Helen*; background with walled city. This panel has great charm.

KAHN Coll., U.S.A. *Fidelity*. As figure of girl, with dog at her feet. (v. ch. II.) Acquired by Capt. Langton Douglas from Chalandon Coll. in Paris, and now in U.S.A.

FLORENCE, MUSEO STIBBERT. Two "cassone" panels shewing story of *Diana and Actaeon*.

FLORENCE. MUSEO NAZIONALE (BARGELLO). Figure of *Scipio Africanus*, upright, wearing cloak and ornate cuirass. Has been attributed to Francesco di Giorgio.

FLORENCE. MR. BERENSON's Coll. at Settignano. Panel treating *Rape of Helen*. Many female figures in foreground, dressed in rich coloured robes, before a Palace of Renaissance design. Behind a grove of trees and walled city; the whole exquisite in decorative feeling.

PARIS. MUSÉE DU LOUVRE. Panel treating *Rape of Europa*, from Campana Coll., may have been retouched. Ovid's story (*Metamorphoseon*, Lib. II.) carried into five charming scenes. (v. ch. II.)

MUNICH. NEMES Coll. Panel with *Story of Tobias*. The painting of this subject, from Nemes Coll., was sold in autumn of 1928 at a high figure. (v. ch. II, Note.)

LIST OF MINIATURES

MINIATURES BY FRANCESCO DI GIORGIO
are to be found in :—

CHANTILLY MUSÉE CONDÉ. *Arts of the Trivio and Quadrivio*. (v. ch. III, p. 50.)

ROME, VATICAN LIBRARY (Codice Urbinate Lat. 508). Panel in tempera with profile portraits of Duke Federigo di Montefeltro and of Francesco di Giorgio as his friend. (v. ch. III, p. 51.)

SIENA. CONVENT OF OSSERVANZA. Two Codices with pages in miniature, viz. : Aristotle's "Treatise on Animals," with commentary by Alberrus Magnus (*Labours of Hercules* in miniature—date 1463-4); and the "Summa Teologica" (*Faith*, a lovely nude, standing on rock—date 1463 : v. ch. III, p. 51).

TURIN. *Self-portrait* in Codex of Ducal Library, on first page, painted in miniature. (v. ch. VI, for illustration).

MADRID. National Library. Codex of Petrarch's Sonnets, Canzoni and Trionfi, painted in miniature for Duke Federigo by Francesco di Giorgio. Found there by Senator Venturi. (v. "L'Arte" 1923 : also ch. III.)

DRAWINGS BY FRANCESCO DI GIORGIO are in the Galleries at :—

FLORENCE—UFFIZI (Gabinetto delle Stampe). *Woman springing to shore from a ship in a wild sea*; suggested by Schubring to be *Ariadne at Naxos*: has been given to Pollajuolo by Morelli, and was also attributed to Piero di Cosimo: but is now given by Dr. Giglioli, Director of this Gabinetto di Stampe, without hesitation to Francesco di Giorgio. I found the background in black ink, the figure itself in a soft sepia ink, very delicately hatched: the face somewhat coarse in type, but the drawing of left hand and foot of exquisite refinement.

Here also *two draped female figures*; the one turning to the spectator very Botticellian in type (v. ch. II); in sepia, delicately hatched.

Pen and ink drawing of *altar*, with *figure of Virgin* upright and *the Child*.

Below is a predella in relief, of the *Nativity*, and at side *two angels*, one bearing incense bowl (R. of Virgin), the other a candelabra. In my notes I find—"Can this be a study for the altar and bronze angels of Siena Duomo by our Master?"

DRAWING of *s. John Baptist in the Desert*. (Uffizi-Gabinetto delle Stampe).

SIENA BIBLIOTECA COMUNE. Drawing of a *woman pouring water into a basin*. *Design for a fountain*.

UFFIZI GALLERY, FLORENCE (Gabinetto delle Stampe). In "L'Arte" of January, 1934, under the title "Disegni Inediti di Francesco di Giorgio," Sig. Cesare Brandi has given some valuable notes on drawings by the Master. He mentions two studies of the *male figure, seen from behind and wearing a mantle*; the second of these, on parchment, carried much further, and the right arm taken out. These had been attributed to Mantegna and later to Beccafumi: now given with certainty by Count Gamba (Rassegna d'Arte, 1909) to Francesco. Even more interesting is the *female figure with arms upraised and loose hair, rushing forward* (Uffizi Gall. Drawings) who is certainly a study for the

Magdalen in the relief of *Deposition* of the Carmine Church at Venice, in which the broken surface—like a frosted window—is so significant of Francesco di Giorgio in sculpture. This drawing is also suggestive, as a first idea, of the marvellous *Discordia* of the Victoria and Albert Museum (*v. Pt. II*), as well as of this *Magdalen* of the Carmine relief, which had been given by Bode to Verrocchio, and later even to Leonardo; while Bertoldo had been also suggested. But Schubring's attribution (in "Die Plastike Siena's") to Francesco di Giorgio, supported most strongly by Venturi is now generally accepted. This drawing thus connects itself with the Venice *Deposition*, and, less directly, with the *Flagellation* of Perugia and the *Judgment of Paris* in Coll. of my lamented friend M. Carl Dreyfus at Paris; more directly still with the *Discordia* above mentioned, for which it might be an initial study. Cesare Brandi has well said here that these four reliefs (*i.e.*, the *Deposition*, *Flagellation*, *Judgment of Paris* and *Discordia*) "form the inseparable group of the reliefs of Francesco di Giorgio." I shall take all these fully later in Part II of this work; and may remark here that Mr. Hill's reproduction and notice (in "Burlington Magazine") of the medal portrait of Duke Federigo in British Museum gave a strong support to the claims of our Master to the Carmine relief.

SIENA—Gallery. A mythological drawing of a *man and three women at a table*. Subject yet uncertain. Midas has been suggested, "divesque miserque," finding the food and drink before him all turned to gold; or again, another version of the "*Calumny of Apelles*," painted by Botticelli (Uffizi Gallery). In describing this drawing Cesare Brandi mentions another mythological scene, on back of same, *Venus and Mars*, standing upright, embracing; and, yet again, still more closely united, while a "Love advances, as if to chastise his lovely mother (*sferzare sua madre*) for her lack of modesty." This critic finds in the upright girl of the front drawing (? Midas) a suggestion of the Angel of the *Annunciation* (*v. ch. II*); while the Venus recalls to him the adolescent angels so dear to Francesco, and the Cupid the "putti."

of the candelabra (*v.* Pt. II) of Siena Duomo; and traces in other drawings of the Uffizi Coll. the influence of Girolamo da Cremona (*v.* note above). "Upon Francesco, more than Neroccio, counted the memories of Vecchietta; and the impression of Girolamo with his refinement of drawing and choice sense of line (*missione lineare*)."

ENGLAND—Coll. HOLMAN HUNT. Nude figures of *Adam and Eve*, fine in drawing.

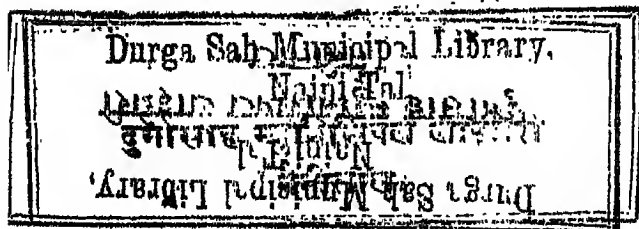
PARIS. MUSÉE DU LOUVRE. Allegory of a *Triumph*; a draped female figure on a car drawn by (?) lions and crowned by angel: numerous figures. Senator Venturi ("Studi dal Vero") says: "evidently a study for a relief: this drawing had been placed under Botticelli."

BRUNSWICK. Figure representing *Allegory of Fortune*.

DRESDEN GALLERY (Print Room). *Perspective of Street*, with houses, finely drawn; has been attributed to Piero della Francesca. Compare with panels at Baltimore, Berlin and at Urbino, as designed for the Palace at Urbino of Duke Federigo.

FLORENCE. My late friend, Mr. Charles Loeser, in his Villa without Florence had a drawing (*female figure*), also for intarsia, in his collection; which has now been unfortunately dispersed, though coming, I believe, in some part to the Uffizi.

Note.—The lists of works in Sculpture and Architecture by Francesco di Giorgio will come appropriately at the end of Part II, which treats especially this side of his creation.



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